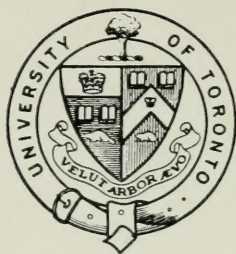


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AN ADMIRAL'S YARNS

STRAY MEMORIES OF 50 YEARS
BY ADMIRAL SIR CHARLES
DUNDAS OF DUNDAS, K.C.M.G.
WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS



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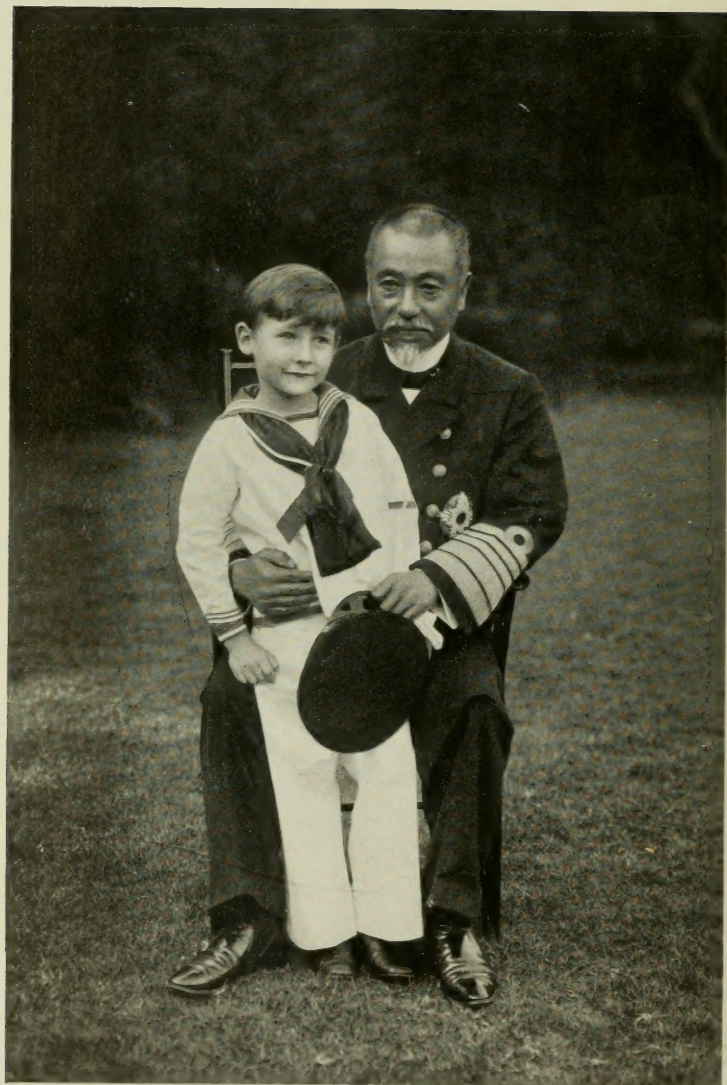
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AN ADMIRAL'S YARNS



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ADMIRAL TOGO AND MY ELDEST SON "JOCK," 1910.

AN
ADMIRAL'S
YARNS

MY MEMORIES OF 50 YEARS
BY ADMIRAL SIR CHARLES
DUNDAS OF DUNDAS, R.C.M.G.
WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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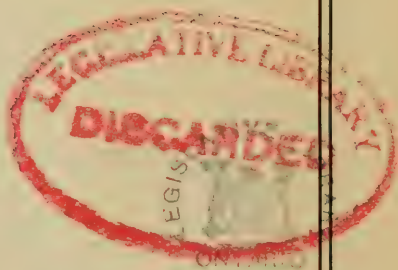
ADMIRAL TOGO AND MY ELDEST SON "JACK," 1910.

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AN ADMIRAL'S YARNS

AN ADMIRAL'S YARNS

CHAPTER I

BRITANNIA DAYS

FOR many years past the embryo naval officer has been associated with the word *Britannia*. The college of that name at Dartmouth is well known as a training establishment for naval cadets, and is, without exception, the best school of its kind in the world. It stands on high ground overlooking the Dart, where its surroundings are morally, intellectually, and physically as good as could be obtained anywhere in the country.

Those of us who joined the Navy in the seventies still nurse warm recollections of the training ship which in those days did duty as a floating college. The *Britannia* was moored just below the creek, bows upstream, with H.M.S. *Hindostan* moored ahead of her. A covered-in bridge joined these two ships, from the bow of one to the stern of the other. They were both wooden line-of-battle ships, painted chequer-sided, and possessing one mast between them. This was the foremast of the *Britannia*, which was fully rigged and was used for teaching the cadets elementary seamanship. The *Britannia*, a three-decker, contained the principal accommodation, while the *Hindostan*,

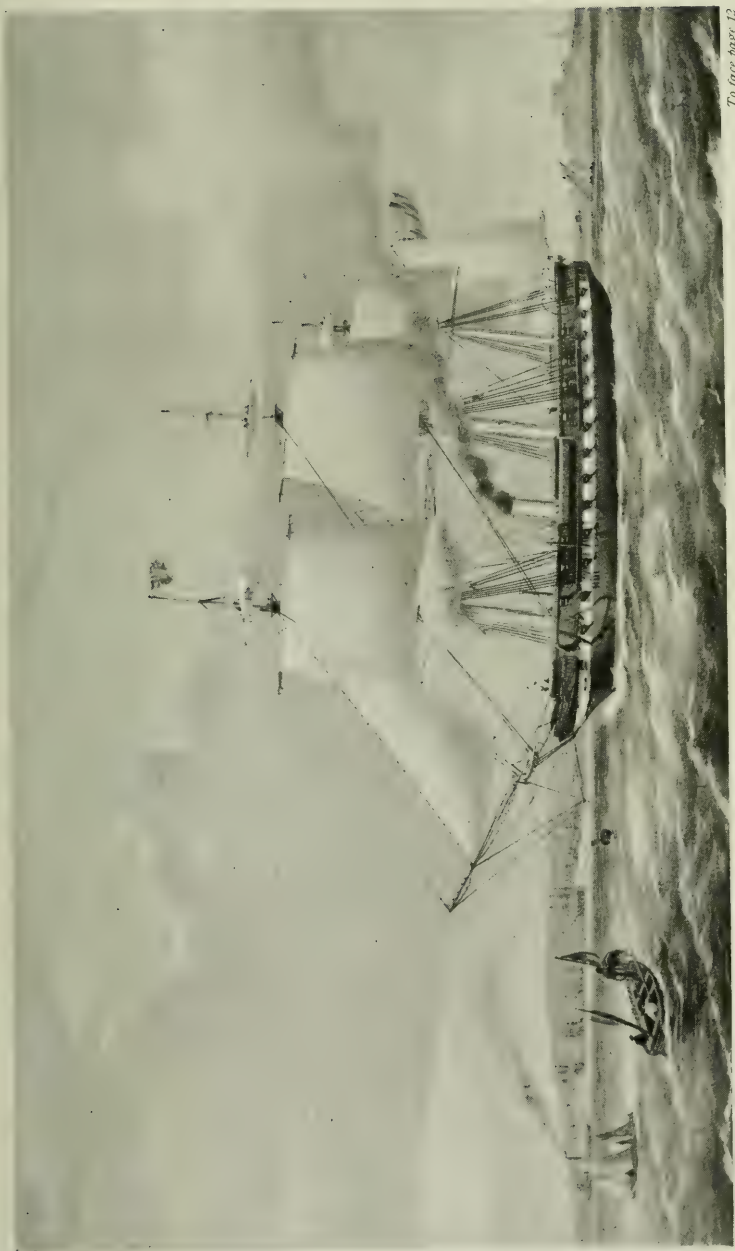
a two-decker, was practically used as an overflow ship and contained the auxiliary accommodation.

The large mess-room, which could completely seat 150 boys, was on the lower deck of the *Britannia* and was heated by three steam radiators, the supply pipes of which ran along overhead. Cadets joined the *Britannia* in batches every half-year and, as their stay was two years, there were always four batches, or terms, on board at one time. These were known as "Cheeky News," "Cheeky Threes," "Plucky Nines," and "Passing Outs."

The terms "Cheeky Threes" and "Plucky Nines" were survivals of the time when new batches joined every three months. The second-term boys had been there only three months and the word "Cheeky" was obviously applied. The "Plucky Nines" were the boys who had been in the *Britannia* nine months, the adjective being added because a certain third term had won a combat with the fourth. Afterwards, when the time in the *Britannia* was extended two years, the names stuck.

Each term had its own table and its own heater, but as there were only three radiators the "Cheeky News" were given the overhead steam-pipes to comfort themselves with on a cold day. The cadet law was very strict and at times arbitrary; but what upset things very much was the irregularity of the numbers of cadets entering the *Britannia* every half-year.

The terms usually numbered between thirty and forty, but occasionally the entries fell to below twenty. This led to a difficulty when the two senior terms were in a large minority, and quite upset the cadet's system of fagging. The unwritten law was that a



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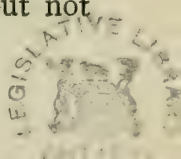
H.M.S. ARROGANT.
THE FIRST SCREW-FRIGATE, TO WHICH MY FATHER WAS APPOINTED IN 1846.

first-term cadet could be fagged by both third and fourth terms, but a second-term cadet could only be fagged by a fourth term. In other words, any cadet could fag a boy who was a year his junior.

On one occasion a very large term joined of nearly fifty boys when the senior terms consisted of only about twenty-five youngsters apiece. It was not many days before rank mutiny began to show itself amongst the newly joined. The fun began over the heaters. The idea of using the overhead steam-pipes was too much for the feelings of the new-comers, so after mature deliberation it was decided to seize the third term's radiator by force. This led to a fearful scrimmage in the mess-room, which was only stopped by the arrival of the master-at-arms and his myrmidons on the field of battle. But honour was not satisfied. A meeting of the leaders of both sides was secretly held, and it was decided that nothing would satisfy either of them but a term fight, and that this should be surreptitiously arranged forthwith.

The appointed time and place having been arranged, both terms went into training for the encounter. The battlefield was a grass meadow just behind the playing-field, and was screened by trees, where the youngsters thought they would not be noticed; but they didn't reckon with the perspicuity of the wily corporal, who was on duty, and who quickly noticed an unusual flow of cadets moving in a suspicious direction to watch the encounter. The combatants had been cunning enough to approach the chosen spot in twos and threes from different directions.

Once there they were marshalled by their chiefs in two lines facing each other in true Bannockburn style. The younger boys were numerically stronger but not



so matured as their elders, for a year makes a lot of difference at thirteen. However, there were two or three giants amongst the younger brigade and they were placed opposite the biggest boys of the other side.

The chief umpire was the head of the fourth term and at his signal the battle commenced. With a defiant cheer the foemen dashed towards each other, but the attack was not carried home in every case. Here and there a little heart failed as the intervening space diminished, and its owner stopped to tie a shoe lace or use some other means of delaying the inevitable close combat that stared him in the face. One little fellow, observing the eye of a well-known bully fixed on him, made no bones about it and fled from the field.

But all honour to the junior term, for most of them opened gamely, like Carpentier at the commencement of one of his famous fights. In less time than it takes to tell, the battle became an Inkerman, and boys were seen wrestling and fighting all over the ground. Weeping casualties with blood trickling from their noses were soon seen withdrawing from the engagement, when their individual victors transferred their attentions elsewhere.

The battle was going in favour of the numerically stronger side, when suddenly one of the umpires yelled "Cave corporal," and this cry being repeated all over the ground had the result of sending the youngsters on both sides immediately to covert. In two minutes there wasn't a cadet in sight. But though the battle had not been won, that term of "Cheeky News" was never fagged again, and the third term had to content themselves with the overhead steam-pipe.

The diet in the *Britannia* was quite good. We had eggs and bacon or fish for breakfast, a good joint of meat for dinner in the middle of the day, and plenty of bread-and-butter for supper. What we appreciated most was a glass of milk and a slice of cake in the afternoon before landing for recreation. I never heard any complaints about the food, and I doubt very much whether the public schools of to-day feed any better than we did then.

What we didn't like was the old corporal system of maintaining discipline. These men came right off the lower deck to be put in charge of the boys who were being trained to become officers. It was a wicked system, because many of these corporals went back to sea and were shipmates later with the cadets when they were midshipmen, who didn't miss the opportunity of getting a little of their own back. Besides which, the corporals were not the right people to be put in charge of gentlemen's sons whom they did not know how to handle.

The system now is very much better; each term has its own lieutenant, who is a friend of the boys and not an enemy as a corporal would be. We also had lieutenants, but they took no sort of interest in the cadets beyond punishing them for their misdeeds.

In the *Britannia*, while I was there, there was only one officer who saw that the whole system of management was wrong. He was a staff commander and taught us the use of the sextant. This dear old gentleman lamented frequently that the cadets had no friend who took any interest in them. He was a bit too old for the job himself, but I am sure he would have done anything he could for the boys if it had been possible. His name was Heather.

The chief mistake was that there was no one who cared what we did when we went ashore, so long as we obeyed the rules about boundaries. There was a field certainly where cricket and football were played, but I don't remember ever being encouraged to go near it, so I spent most of my time where I was not allowed to go.

The system of fagging which existed in the *Britannia* in those days had its merits, but it was sometimes carried too far, the junior boys being constantly fagged to get whatever the season provided, such as apples, nuts, blackberries, and birds' eggs. As the cadets were confined to the roads, and all the fields and woods were out of bounds, it was impossible to obtain these luxuries without breaking the law. When the cadets landed for recreation there were always two corporals on duty on shore, who were as cunning as foxes in running down their quarries. Most of these men were brutal in the delight they took in running the cadets in, but I am glad to say that one of them in my time had the instinct of a gentleman, as the following anecdote will show.

With another boy I was fagged to get chestnuts, and we selected the skipper's covert for our field of action. Here we found a tree which suited our requirements, and, leaving my companion to watch below, I climbed into the branches and shook off the nuts. After a few minutes the cry of "Cave corporal" brought me down with a rush, and both of us legged it for the boathouse. We got away clear and, reaching the landing-place, entered our names on the boat register and immediately embarked on the river, flattering ourselves that we had escaped detection.

After pulling round the harbour for an hour or so,

we landed and hauled up our skiff. A corporal was standing watching us, and, as soon as we had finished, came up to me and said, "Here is your handkerchief, sir, I found it under a chestnut tree in the skipper's covert." I was overwhelmed with disappointment and anxiety as to what my punishment would be and could only mumble, "Thank you, corporal," as I took it from his hand. Receiving no summons to appear before the officer of the day on my return to the ship, my spirits rose and, hearing nothing further of my escapade the next morning, I built a little pedestal in my heart on which I placed my friend the corporal, and on which he stands in my memory to this very day.

The Captain of the *Britannia* at that time was a widower with one daughter, a girl in her early teens. This little lady was quite pretty, and naturally enough the heart of one of the cadets was touched by her charm and beauty. Silent love cannot be borne for long, not even by a cadet, so the day came when this boy simply had to confess his feelings to the object of his young affections. He thereupon penned a touching little note, sealed it with a kiss, and handed it to the orderly outside the Captain's cabin door. But alas! the course of true love is beset with constant danger.

Entering the cabin, the orderly looked round for the young lady, and not seeing her, was about to retire when the Captain asked him what he wanted. "A letter for Miss ——." "Give it to me," said the Captain, and the orderly surrendered the precious missive and departed. What happened after that is wrapped in obscurity. All we knew was that the passionate cadet was cast into the deepest dungeon,

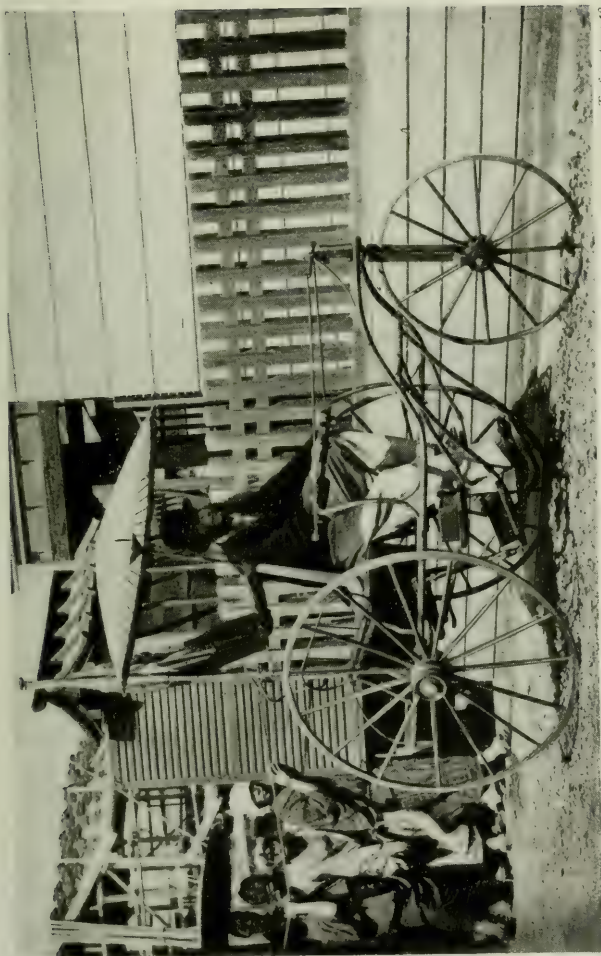
where he feasted on bread and water for fourteen days, and had much time to reflect on the folly of setting his ambitions too high.

We boys were, of course, always ready to hear the experiences of our seamen instructors. Once or twice a week each class had to attend instruction in knotting and splicing, flags, compass and other elementary subjects of a nautical character. Towards the end of the lesson a little latitude was allowed, and we begged our instructor to spin us a yarn.

On one occasion, I remember, we had just finished being taught the flags by a dear old ginger-bearded quartermaster, when one of the boys asked him if he had ever been flogged. "Why, bless yer 'eart, sir, scores of times," was his reply. Then another cadet asked the quartermaster if he had ever seen a man hanged. "Dozens of 'em," said the old salt; "why, it was quite a common thing when I was up the Straits in '62 to 'ear the bosun's mate of the morning watch pass the word, 'Do ye 'ear there, you men as are going to be 'ung at eight o'clock, ye'll get yer breakfasts at seven bells.'"

I've heard a good many naval lies in my time, but I have never heard one to equal that.

I have one more story showing the utter forgetfulness of youth. A friend of mine, whose grandfather was a lowland chief and lived in an eight-hundred-year-old castle in the north, came back to the *Britannia* after the holidays minus his keys. It was the rule that we wore our keys on long white knife lanyards round our necks, so as not to lose them, but at home this rule was not always observed. The boy wrote to his people in a dreadful state about his loss, but the keys could not be found. Three weeks later



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MY FATHER, COMMANDER A. D. DUNDAS, ON THE FIRST TRICYCLE EVER SEEN IN JAPAN, 1865.

Note the umbrella, and the British flag in the stern.

he received the following telegram: "Your keys found tied to the tail of a skeleton cat; they will be forwarded immediately." Our young Scotch friend had actually forgotten the cat's existence.

Amongst the boys who were in the *Britannia* with me were several who distinguished themselves during the great war of 1914-18.

The principal one of these was young Jellicoe, who passed in second in my term in the summer of 1872 and maintained his place throughout, passing out as midshipman and receiving all the honours that were possible in those days. Jellicoe, as I remember him, was a quiet, rather reserved boy. He was short and sturdy, and during our last term became one of our two chief captains, who had to keep the rest of the cadets in order in the mess-room. I have no recollection that he ever made himself aggressive or unpopular in the carrying out of his duties; but rather the other way. He was always polite and civil to us all. He was not in my class, so I wasn't thrown much with him; but I believe he had plenty of friends. Two terms ahead of me were Cecil Burney and Sturdee, both of whom played prominent parts during the war.

Burney was a charming fellow and did not bully any of us as so many of the senior boys did. He was always a strong boy and a great athlete.

Sturdee was more of a studious turn of mind. He too was not a bully. Both of them were captains of cadets in their third term, and one was a chief captain in his last term. Jerram too, was in the *Britannia* when I was there; but I don't remember very much about him except that he had a red head.

Peirse, Briggs, Bradford, Slade, Patey, Thursby, Stoddart and Tupper, who were in the training ship

with me also, became admirals and served during the war.

It is extraordinary how the wastage goes on among naval officers from the moment they join the *Britannia*. Out of forty entries in my term only three became admirals. One boy who passed the entrance examination was drowned before he actually joined up. Two boys were dismissed for misconduct before we left the *Britannia*. One of these boys was a harum-scarum sort of chap who was always up to some devilment. He never did anything very wicked. He was just foolish. I remember one of his pranks: he put some gunpowder in a hole in the wooden side of the ship and then exploded it with a burning-glass. It might have done damage to the ship, but it didn't. However, he was very severely punished. We thought it was rather a stupid experiment on his part.

After we left the *Britannia* two boys were drowned, both of whom were very brave young midshipmen. One, whose name was Wingfield, was lost in the deplorable accident near Singapore mentioned in another chapter. The other, whose name was Rushworth, was the midshipman of a cutter which was sailing off to its ship at Besika Bay one very dark winter evening when it was snowing. Both he and his coxswain were sitting on the little seats behind the backboard when the latter fell overboard, and Rushworth immediately jumped after him. There being no responsible sailor in the boat, it was some time before the sails were lowered and the boat was put under oars. By this time nothing could be seen of the two who were in the water. The boat was turned round as quickly as possible, and spent a considerable time looking for them both, but without

success. How the coxswain fell overboard no one ever knew.

One boy was killed during the Zulu War of 1879, two more failed to pass for lieutenant and about eight left the service before reaching the rank of commander, about a dozen died, and of the remainder who reached the commanders' list, five became captains, and of these, three only ever hoisted their flags as admirals. Three out of forty seems a very low percentage to reach the flag list.

The *Britannia* was originally called *The Prince of Wales*. Previous to being moored at Dartmouth she carried out her duties for a short time at Portland, but as the breakwater had not been built the anchorage was not considered a safe one for such a valuable complement, and Dartmouth was chosen in preference.

Since those days the Navy has changed very much. The Great War has proved that the same spirit exists; but in material and personnel the change has been radical. A line-of-battle ship, which only cost half a million to build in the seventies, now costs more than ten times as much before she is completed for sea, while masts and yards have been swept away as utterly useless. Even seamanship as we knew it has vanished, and it is now hard to find an officer who really knows how to sail a boat. The pay of the Navy has been much improved, and the conditions of living generally are a great deal better than they were when I first went to sea.

But one wonders whether the world is any the better for it all. We live in an appalling age of destruction, and there is no knowing where it will end. Men now strive to destroy whole nations, and it looks as if they will not be satisfied till they can

invent some means of blowing up the entire universe.

The only safeguard for the future lies in some form of united protection. It may be that the League of Nations will develop into some body that will be our salvation ; or some clever man may devise a better plan, but the fact remains that the world is in great danger, and that we are all living in a fool's paradise.

CHAPTER II

MY FIRST SEA-GOING SHIPS

AFTER leaving the *Britannia* in 1874, I was appointed, to my great joy and delight, to the *Audacious*, about to be commissioned as flagship of Admiral Ryder for the China station. Our captain was Captain Philip H. Colomb. What pleased me most was that my great chum, Frank Garforth, was appointed to the same ship. The flagship not being ready to receive us, the commissioning took place on board the old wooden frigate *Forte*, then lying in the basin at Chatham.

I will never forget that day. It was pouring with rain, and for hours we naval cadets stood in the wet, waiting while the ship's company were being told off to their various duties. The older midshipmen were running about making themselves useful ; but we youngsters hadn't an idea what we ought to do ; so we were miserable. At last we were told to go below and see our hammocks slung, and it was a comfort to get down out of the rain. Our gun-room was on the starboard after-end of the main deck, and had a long table running fore and aft, where we had dinner. What a meal that was. As far as I remember the senior members of the mess amused themselves the whole of dinner by bombarding the cadets' legs with empty beer-bottles under the table.

The subs. and senior middies were at one end of the long table, while the juniors were at the other, and these empty bottles were hurled the full length of the table and were most disconcerting. I don't think I enjoyed that dinner at all. When it was over I was only too glad to get below and turn into my hammock. The following day the authorities decided that Chatham was no place for junior midshipmen; so we were all sent on leave till the flagship was ready to receive us. Three weeks later we returned and were given our first experience of watch-keeping. I remember, too, being highly delighted at receiving £10 back pay from the paymaster. I had never seen so much money before, and I felt like a millionaire. Something really great had to be done with this huge fortune, so I went ashore and bought a revolver. We sailed for China the next day.

We had some splendid fellows in our gunroom. Our senior midshipman was the present Sir Seymour Fortescue, and the next was the late Captain Fogerty Fegan, a wild Irishman, who was the terror of the small boys.

"Out hand, or I'll hit ye over the head," was an expression he often addressed to me. The present Earl of Wharncliffe was another. A wild lot they were; but I loved them all.

Many a boy has had his first glimpse of foreign lands on entering the Straits of Gibraltar. The sight of the renowned Rock is very inspiring to the youthful mind, and we boys all crowded on top of the upper battery as our good ship steamed up to the anchorage. We were thrilled with the stories our lieutenants told us of the thousands of guns that were hidden amongst the concealed galleries.

As soon as the anchor was let go, the bumboat, full of tropical fruit and other delicacies, came alongside, and I watched the men with feelings of envy climbing down into it, in order to make their purchases. At last I could stand the temptation no longer, and in a moment I was amongst the struggling mass in the bumboat. It was difficult to get served at first, but as soon as I was discovered the men very kindly gave way to me, and I secured a box of Turkish delight and some lovely oranges with which I scrambled up the ship's side filled with happiness. But alas! my joy was short-lived.

On reaching the deck I was met by the signal-mate, Stuart Wortley, who asked me what I meant by going down into the bumboat. I looked amazed and stood speechless. "I'll teach you," he said, "that young gentlemen are not allowed to do that. You will go down to the gunroom and wait there for me." Sad and sorrowful I made my way below, where a few minutes later I was laid across the table and received my first thrashing. It was laid on with a dirk scabbard and made me feel sore for a week. But I bore the signal-mate no ill-will. He was a splendid fellow, and was simply helping to make the ship efficient.

After a short stay we left Gib., and continued our voyage to the east. The canal thrilled us of course and, passing down the Red Sea, we reached the barren rocks of Aden, where we took in an extra supply of coal for the long voyage to Ceylon. During this trip a very exciting incident occurred, which remains impressed on my memory as if it had happened yesterday.

The ship was steaming at economical speed on a pitch-dark night. The officer of the first watch,

Lieutenant the Hon. F. R. Sandilands, had been relieved, and, finding it very hot below, had put on a Japanese kimono and returned to the bridge to talk to the lieutenant who had just before taken over his duty. Just at that moment a big heavy ship's corporal, who was hanging up some washed clothes to dry on the anchor, slipped and fell overboard. Sandilands threw off his kimono and jumped into the sea ; he had heard the corporal groan as he passed abreast of the bridge. It requires some courage to leave your ship on a coal-black night and take a header into the inky darkness, well knowing that the sea abounded with sharks and that under the most favourable circumstances your ship could not be stopped inside a quarter of a mile. It would be fifty to one against the boat finding you.

Fortunately on this occasion the night was calm and the ship was not going fast. But those were points which never occurred to the gallant gentleman who risked his life to save his shipmate.

The cry of "Man overboard," the smart manning of the lifeboat, with the rushing of many feet, and the ringing of the engine-room telegraph brought all of us boys flying up on deck, and we clustered on top of a little monkey poop at the ship's stern, from whence we could peer in the direction of the rescuing cutter. There was at first a hitch in getting the boat clear of its tackles and we heard distinctly the cry across the water, "For God's sake send the boat." "It's coming, it's coming," we all cried in reply. Then a pause and out of the darkness the voice again called, "I can't keep him up any longer, for God's sake hurry the boat up." The men in the boat heard the cry of agony and made the cutter fly through the water.



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THE HEROIC SANDILANDS.

Then the clatter of oars as they were tossed in by the bowmen, a pause, and then, "We've got 'em both, sir," came across the water in the gruff voice of the coxswain. "Thank God, thank God," we all cried.

By this time the whole ship's company were aft, but there hadn't been a sound during the last two minutes. Every officer and man was spellbound with the intensity of the anxious moments. The relief when the boat was heard returning was very great, and most of us rushed to the gangway hoping that all was well with both officer and man. The gallant Sandilands, who was quite a small man, came up the ship's side first, absolutely stark naked. He seemed dreadfully tired, poor chap, and had to be helped below. The corporal was brought on board, but he was only just alive, and the doctors failed to resuscitate him in the sick bay. The poor fellow died a quarter of an hour after he reached the ship.

It was thought that the corporal must have hit his head when he fell overboard, as he was insensible when his rescuer picked him up. For this gallant deed Sandilands won the Albert Medal of the 1st class, the Humane Society's medal, and the Stanhope gold medal for the bravest case of saving life at sea in the year.

In due course we reached the China station, and our admiral took over the command. We heard many yarns about what had happened out there in recent years. Stories about pirates always interested us, and there were many, but it seemed to me that if they were true, some of our officers were nearly as great pirates as the Chinese themselves. One gallant captain, who commanded a British sloop, was notorious

for his arbitrary action in putting down the pirates. He boarded junks indiscriminately and demanded "squeeze pidgin," without going deeply into their occupations, and in many cases sank perfectly harmless seafarers and landed the crews on the nearest coast.

Squeeze pidgin is recognised in China as almost a legitimate kind of blackmail. You must get as much out of anyone as you can. As there was no postal system or telegraphs in those days, it took a long time for information to get about, so no complaints ever reached head-quarters, but it was said that this captain made £30,000 during his three years' commission by illegal methods.

A yarn, à propos of cooks, whom I have always thought were the only class of workers who escaped punishment for their misdeeds, is worth repeating, as it is the only case I know of where the culprit did not escape retribution. The story is probably a gross exaggeration, so I give it for what it is worth.

A gunboat was stationed up the Yangtsi in the early sixties, and in her wardroom were three "rorty" young sub-lieutenants. For some time they had suffered in silence from the evil-smelling food which had been sent down to their mess by the Chinese cook. At last they could stand it no longer. The day came when everything was uneatable and they could not contain themselves.

It was decided to try the cook by court-martial.

Accordingly these three young officers, dressed in their cocked hats and swords, sat round the wardroom table, and swore themselves in as members of the court, with the senior sub. acting as president. The

prisoner was sent for and duly warned that anything he might wish to say would certainly be taken in evidence against him. This being translated to him in pidgin English by the steward he decided to say what he had to say in Chinese, which the steward discreetly translated to the court. The trial commenced by the reading of the charge, after which the president said it was unnecessary to call any evidence as the prisoner was undeniably guilty, so the court was closed to consider the sentence.

On the reopening, the president, in a solemn voice, informed the prisoner that he had been sentenced to death. It took some time for the steward to explain the situation to the prisoner, but when he did realise his fate, he gave one fiendish yell and dashed up the ladder to make his escape. The junior sub. was, however, too quick for him and caught his left foot just as he reached the deck. The other two subs. were on him in a moment and the court proceeded to carry out the sentence by dragging the unfortunate Chinaman to the gunboat's gangway, and pushing him into the river. As the vessel was only a few yards from the shore it was never anticipated that the Celestial would get more than a ducking, but he took his sentence somewhat too literally and, making no effort to reach the river bank, slipped quietly beneath the surface never to be seen again.

It was impossible to keep the matter quiet, so the captain was informed that the wardroom cook had been accidentally drowned alongside the ship during the afternoon. At first the true story did not leak out, and the wardroom officers were beginning to feel that they were well out of a very bad business ; but there were several other Chinamen on board the gunboat,

and after a few weeks the true facts reached the admiral. He at once ordered a court-martial and the senior member of the wardroom mess was sentenced to be dismissed the service with disgrace and be imprisoned with hard labour for twelve calendar months. The other members of the mock court-martial were severely reprimanded.

The system which prevailed in the seventies of distributing the ships on the station made life in China very pleasant. The fleet consisted of the flagship, three corvettes, and a dozen or more gun-vessels and gunboats. The flagship visited each part of the station once a year. The corvettes were each stationed at Yokohama, Shanghai and Singapore in turn for a year, acting as senior officer's ship for that particular district and controlling the work of the small craft under their orders.

Shanghai was the favourite place for the officers who liked sport, because of the Yangtsi, which abounded with game, but Japan was perhaps the most popular, as it was a new country and intensely interesting. The only objection to Singapore was that it was so unmercifully hot all the year round.

The gunboats were distributed about the whole station. There were usually two attached to the senior officer's ship at Singapore, two in Japan and the remainder on the China coast, three or four being up the Yangtsi.

Hankow was the farthest port up the river that was ever visited in those days by a man-of-war. Above Hankow the river became more difficult, as it was narrower and the stream was much faster, so the poor old six-knot gunboats could not tackle it. A small craft did reach Ichang, but it took her weeks

to get there, although it was only a few hundred miles above Hankow.

The river gunboats of the present time draw less water and steam faster, so they think nothing of the journey and go much farther up. It is not very difficult now to go eight hundred miles into the interior of China by steamer, and it is a most interesting journey.

The men liked the large treaty ports best, because they afforded more amusement. It was the custom then to give forty-eight hours' leave at the beginning of every month to the men, who went ashore with their pockets full of money and remained there till it was all spent. The actual time the leave expired was of no moment to them; what mattered was when the money ran out. The consequence was that a very large proportion of the men broke their leave.

CHAPTER III

THE BATTLE OF KAGOSHIMA

BEFORE I joined the Navy, I was out in Japan with my father and mother. The following stories were told me by my parents who knew all the people concerned.

On the 14th of September, 1862, Mr. C. L. Richardson, a China merchant, who was on a visit to Yokohama, went with three other English people for a ride along the To-kai-do towards Kawasaki, when they met the procession of Shimadzee Saburo, a Prince of Satsuma.

The procession was at first composed of a somewhat broken, but continuous train of attendants, who were armed with spears and swords. As they approached the village of Namamugi, a more compact and regular body came in sight, immediately preceding the Norimono in which the Prince was seated.

The Japanese were greatly incensed because the party of foreigners did not make way for their procession. Mr. Richardson, who was leading his party, was suddenly attacked by the samurai near him and was killed. The rest of the party were wounded, but managed to escape.

At this time the feeling in Japan was very much against all foreigners, and it was not safe to venture outside the treaty ports. But as treaties had been signed, it was necessary to make the Japanese conform

to their conditions, so the Richardson case was taken up by the British Chargé d'Affaires, Colonel Neale.

After several months of haggling, the Japanese authorities informed the representatives of the Foreign Powers that they intended to close all the ports and drive the foreigners out of Japan. The reply to this was a warning that Japan was issuing a declaration of war to the world, and they were advised to reconsider it.

On July 3rd, 1863, the Japanese Government sent an apology for the murder of Mr. Richardson, and expressed a hope that affairs likely to break off the intercourse between the two countries would not again arise.

This shows the state of confusion into which the Councils of the Empire were getting. There had been many outrages of different kinds, and they were not confined to any particular nation. American, French and British vessels had been fired on.

A state of unrest existed in Japan at the moment when the apology was sent, and there was no promise of compensation. The Tokio officials had complained that they had little power over the Prince of Satsuma, so it was decided to send the British Fleet to the Satsuma capital to arrange a settlement.

On the 6th of August, 1863, the squadron, consisting of the *Euryalus* (35), *Pearl* (21), *Argus* (6), *Havock* (2), *Coquette* (4), *Racehorse* (4), and *Perseus* (17), having on board Colonel Neale, weighed anchor and proceeded to Kagoshima.

The squadron anchored off that town on the 12th, in twenty fathoms of water. A communication was at once sent to the Prince of Satsuma demanding—

1st. The trial and execution of the murderers of Mr. Richardson.

2nd. An indemnity of £25,000.

A reply was asked for at once, but none arrived till 9 p.m. on the second day, and it was not satisfactory ; but no action was then taken. Owing to the strong nature of the weather, the ships were moved to safer anchorages.

On the forenoon of the 15th, the fleet seized as hostages three steamers belonging to the Satsuma Government. Later in the day a battery suddenly opened fire on the flagship (*Euryalus*).

All the ships then got under way and formed line of battle and steamed past the batteries at slow speed, the distance between the ships and the Japanese guns varying from 200 to 800 yards.

The weather had now become very much worse and a full gale was blowing. Towards dusk the town was on fire in several places and three batteries had been silenced. The squadron then anchored out of range, except the *Racehorse*, which ran ashore close to one of the batteries. The *Argus* went to her assistance, and got her off after the guns had been silenced.

The loss in the squadron had been eleven killed and thirty-nine wounded. The former included Captain Joslin and Commander Wilmott of the flagship, both killed by the same shot. At 9 p.m. most of the town was on fire, and the next morning (the 16th), after burying the dead, the ships steamed to sea, engaging the batteries as they passed out, very few of which returned their fire.

The loss of the Japanese had been very great. The whole city was practically destroyed, and all the batteries had been severely damaged. The three

steamers, which had been seized as hostages, had been sunk and several large junks set on fire. The ships, some of which had been within 200 yards of the enemy's guns, were not hit below the water-line, but had been damaged along their upper decks and aloft.

The Japanese had twelve batteries, carrying altogether about sixty guns, all of which were smooth bores. The biggest were 32-pounders, of which there were forty.

It had been Admiral Kuper's intention to hold the three ships as hostages till the indemnity was paid, but the Japanese did not understand this, and opened fire soon after they saw their ships being taken possession of by the British.

The Admiral withdrew because he thought he had punished the Prince of Satsuma sufficiently. The Japanese seeing the British ships steam away thought they had won the victory, but on the 6th of November the indemnity was paid at Tokio, so it was evident that a clearer view of the situation came to them later.

Admiral Kuper's handling of the situation was not generally approved of. It was thought that the bombardment of the city was unnecessary, and that insufficient strategy was employed in the attack on the batteries.

Years after the Battle of Kagoshima, when I was in the *Audacious*, I was talking to one of our men one day who had been in China ten or twelve years previously, and had been a signalman on board the *Euryalus*, the flagship at the battle of Kagoshima. He told me that it was a Sunday afternoon and the officers were exchanging visits with each other when the engagement commenced. There was a fearful scurry

to get everyone back to their own ships and, as steam was ready, anchors were weighed and the fleet steamed in line ahead straight past the batteries at a distance of 400 yards, and brought them to close action. The Japanese had the channel marked with buoys, so the range was easily calculated, and the casualties were very heavy on board the ships. On board the flagship the captain and commander had their heads taken off with one shot. They were standing on the bridge when the disaster happened.

My friend the signalman described it to me as follows : " You see, sir, I was doing duty on the bridge at the time and I saw the whole business. The admiral and the navigating officer were alongside each other leaning over the chart table, with the captain and commander standing on either side of them, when along comes a 40-pounder round shot and takes off both the heads of the two officers standing up. The admiral and the navigating officer were saved because they were leaning forward over the chart. Directly it happened the admiral looked round and, seeing the two headless bodies lying on the deck beside him, turned to me and said, ' Boy, have that mess wiped up.' Then he leaned forward again over the chart, and went on talking to the navigator as if nothing had happened."

The fleet then steamed out of action and retired from the contest. It was an ignominious defeat, which brought severe censure on the admiral later on when the news reached home.

The Japanese never forgot it, and to this very day remember when the men of Satsuma defied the authority of the British Navy.

One day, when I was dining with several Japanese



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MAJOR BALDWIN, OF THE 20TH REGIMENT.

He was murdered by a Japanese fanatic on the 21st Nov., 1864,
near Kamakura, Japan.

admirals, the conversation turned on the subject of Kagoshima, and I was told that Admiral Ito, who was a samurai at the time, had gone off in a sampan with a number of other "two-sworded" men with the express intention of boarding and capturing the British flagship by means of a ruse.

It was before the action took place, when the fleet was quietly waiting while the admiral was negotiating with the Japanese authorities. The plan was to go alongside the *Euryalus* with a boat full of wares for sale, and get permission to take these goods on board and sell them. At a given signal the samurai, about half a dozen in number, were to draw their long swords and capture the ship. It was a great plan, the courage and ingenuity of which was worthy of the days of Robert the Bruce.

What would have happened if these six men had succeeded in getting on board will never be known, for the moment they approached within fifty yards of the ship, they were threatened with instant death by the armed sentry on the gangway, and, feeling the hopelessness of their self-imposed task, beat a hasty retreat to the shore.

Even if they had succeeded in their bold scheme to capture the flagship, they had still to deal with the rest of the fleet, and one wonders what further plans they had to meet that contingency. On the whole it seems a very fortunate thing for the Satsuma men that their little escapade broke down so soon.

The Japanese admirals laughed very much at the thought of this wild scheme for capturing a British man-of-war with a crew of five hundred officers and men as if she was a small merchant ship, and chaffed me

unmercifully about the narrow escape the *Euryalus* had.

Several other murders of foreigners took place in Japan about this time, and in the summer of 1864 the 20th Regiment arrived at Yokohama and was quartered on the bluff. On the 21st of November, two officers of this regiment, Major Baldwin and Lieutenant Bird, were returning to Yokohama from Diabutz, when they were attacked and murdered at the spot where the road from Kamakura joins the road leading up to the Hatchiman Temple.

Major Baldwin, who was riding behind, was cut almost in two with a long Japanese sword, and fell from his horse dead. Lieutenant Bird was able to use his revolver, but was eventually overcome, and died from his wounds.

Sir Rutherford Alcock, the British Minister, insisted on the affair being investigated and the culprits punished.

In December, 1864, the first of these men was captured and, after a careful investigation to establish his identity, he was lodged in the Tobé prison near Yokohama. The sentence was that he should be exhibited through the streets of Yokohama, then decapitated and his head subsequently exposed to the public view.

On the 30th of December he was placed, tightly bound, on a pack-horse and led through the streets of the native town and the foreign settlement. A board was carried in front of him on which was written his sentence in large characters, while a number of Japanese officials took part in the procession. The man's demeanour was very hostile to foreigners. During the whole of the route he sang in a loud voice



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THE EXECUTION AT TOBÈ.



about his abhorrence of them, begging his countrymen to follow his example. At dusk he was taken back to the Tobé prison.

At 10 a.m. the next morning the execution took place on the high ground just above the Tobé. The 20th Regiment, the Royal Marines and the Artillery were formed up in three sides of a square facing the spot where the prisoner was to suffer.

A hole about three feet square had been dug, and when the norimon arrived with the prisoner, it was placed on the ground near this hole. The bars of the norimon being removed, the prisoner jumped out nimbly and immediately knelt in front of the hole unassisted, even refusing to have his eyes covered.

Asking the executioner to wait a moment, he threw himself back on his haunches and sang a verse of terrible imprecation on all foreigners. He then cautioned the executioner to be careful and, leaning forward over the hole, he was dead the next instant.

The head was exhibited the same day at the Yoshida bridge on a board with the neck embedded in clay to keep it upright, where it remained three days.

His name was Shimidzu Seizi. His companion was caught and executed three months later.

CHAPTER IV

IN CHINA SEAS

WHEN I was in the *Thalia* at Shanghai in 1875 we had a lively lot of boys in the gunroom. It wasn't a very good school for a midshipman of sixteen, as the others were several years older, and the pace was rather too warm for the youngster.

The senior member of our mess was an acting sub-lieutenant of five years' standing. We also had another boy of the same rank who was only a few months his junior. Both these young people should have gone home for their examinations years before, but somehow they got overlooked and stayed on where they were. The life was a merry one and I suppose they preferred it to the uncertainties ahead of them elsewhere. They both failed to pass, when they eventually got home, which was only to be expected.

We also had a navigating sub-lieutenant and a navigating midshipman on board. Both these young officers were comparatively older than the rest of us. Their most important duty in harbour was to see the rum served out.

One day, soon after I joined, the navigating midshipman said to me—

“Look here, youngster, have you ever seen the rum served out?”

"No," I replied.

"Well, I am going ashore, and you must attend in my place."

"What have I got to do?" I asked.

"Oh, you just go down to the steerage and stand alongside the ship's steward. When he says, 'All ready, sir,' you say, 'Carry on, steward.' Then you watch the different cooks of messes come up and get their allowance of rum when the steward calls their names out. When he calls out, 'Gunroom three gills,' you say, 'No, steward, gunroom six gills,' and that is all you have to do."

I replied that I thought I could do that all right, as it seemed very simple.

It all went off very well; but I couldn't quite understand what they were all smiling at when I corrected the *stupid* mistake of the ship's steward about the gunroom allowance. Before I was many months older I knew a lot about it though.

One of our midshipmen was an awfully nice boy. He was the one who had thrashed me for going into the bumboat when I was in the *Audacious*. He was very popular, both ashore and afloat.

Whenever I think of him it brings a very amusing incident to my mind. Shanghai was a lively place in those days, and there was always a lot going on at night in the way of dinners, dances, theatres and other amusements, so it was not uncommon for some of the young officers to return to the ship in the early hours of the morning. They were generally cunning enough to get off before the men commenced to scrub the decks and managed to get below without being noticed.

On one occasion our young friend was missing at breakfast time, and we were all rather alarmed, as it

was a Friday, when the ship's company were exercised at gun-drill and no one was allowed to be absent. But what made it worse was that he was A.D.C. to the first lieutenant, and was sure to be bowled out if he was not at his station during the drill.

At 9.30 a.m. the bugle sounded "General Quarters" and the guns were cleared away and the crews exercised by their officers, but there was no sign of the missing midshipman. The drill lasted an hour and, when the "Retreat" was sounded, there was still no sign of the boy.

A good look-out was being kept on the landing-stage by the other youngsters, as we were all rather anxious that our messmate should not get into trouble. At last a sampan was seen coming off to the ship with its hood down, so that the passenger was concealed from view. Fortunately the first lieutenant was not on deck; so we waved to the Chinamen to avoid the accommodation ladder and go round the port side, where the steps on the ship's side passed close to the gunroom port.

The moment the boat got close alongside up went the hood and sure enough there was the smiling face of our missing messmate. In a moment several willing hands were thrust out, and the boy was seized and dragged in through the gunroom port.

At first we could get nothing out of him. The whole incident had so amused him that he just sat down on the gunroom lockers and roared with laughter. That was all very well for a minute or two, but the serious side of the situation had to be faced. That, however, didn't appeal to him a bit, and amid shrieks of delight he told us some of his night's experiences.

At last it was really time this sort of thing was

stopped. I was only a kid at the time, but I felt that the only chance was to get our friend freshened up and put into uniform and made to go and report himself to the first lieutenant.

After a bit he became sensible enough to see that he ought to do this, so we got him down to his cabin (all the middies had cabins in that ship) and undressed him and gave him a jolly good cold bath. Buckets and buckets of cold water were poured over him until at last we got him to stop giggling. Then he was dressed in his uniform and sent to report himself, looking as spruce and smart as a young guardsman.

When he went up to the first lieutenant and said, "Come on board, sir," the only words that were said in reply were, "Thank you." Needless to say this impressed us all very much, and made us think no end of our executive officer.

We naturally concluded that as both the lieutenant and the midshipman were Yorkshiremen the proceeding was quite a natural one. Being a Scotchman myself, it filled me with admiration. I would certainly have done the same thing to a brother Scot, unless he had been an out-and-outer.

Another incident that rather tickled me occurred about this time to one of our acting sub-lieutenants called Boothby. With one or two of his messmates he was on shore one evening at the old Central Hotel, where they sometimes went to play billiards after dinner.

When the game was over they went up to the bar to toss for drinks. A Greek, who was standing there at the time, asked to be allowed to join in. While the dice were being thrown Boothby's links fell out of his shirt cuff and he picked them up and put them in his

pocket. The Greek having been let in for the drinks, and having noticed Boothby put something quickly in his pocket, suspected cheating.

"Ah! Mr. Boothby, you are very light-handed," he cried.

"Am I?" said Boothby, and he straightway knocked the offender down.

The Greek was on his feet in a moment, challenging Boothby to fight a duel. That not being the way of settling disputes in the Royal Navy, the foreigner was kicked down the steps of the hotel and landed in the street on his nose, and told that if he returned he would receive even worse treatment.

The last seen of him was when he was vowing vengeance and declaring he would shoot Boothby the very next time he saw him.

For some days after that we noticed that our acting sub-lieutenant did not take the beach, but as nothing more was seen or heard of the Greek, he ventured ashore after about a fortnight, but he never landed again without his shot-gun.

While on the China station I had one or two narrow escapes, but the most miraculous one was when I was in the *Audacious* going from Kobe to Yokohama and we were very nearly all lost. Our flat-bottomed old ironclad was skidding along under double-reefed topsails and easy steam, with a strong gale from the northward. The course set would, we thought, take us thirty miles clear of the Redfield rocks. There was a heavy sea on and the ship was making more leeway than was anticipated. The rocks were only a few feet clear at high water and there was no lighthouse on them then.

At about 1 a.m. the starboard after-look-out man

sang out, "Breakers on the lee bow." Fortunately we had a good officer of the watch on deck and he immediately put the helm hard astarboard, set the telegraphs to full speed ahead and turned the hands up to shorten sail.

I was sleeping in my hammock at the foot of the ladder leading down from the quarter-deck and, as the ship turned up towards the wind, a sea struck her and the water came pouring down the hatchway in one big lump. When I looked out of my hammock the whole place was flooded, and water was washing about everywhere beneath me. On deck men were rushing about up to their waists in water, manning the ropes required to take in the sails, and amidst the excitement the admiral was nearly washed overboard.

The quick resource of the officer of the watch just saved the ship, for she passed within one hundred feet of the breakers and just missed becoming a total wreck. Had she touched, not a man on board could possibly have been saved. I did not leave my hammock till 4 a.m. as I had the morning watch, but I heard all the details at the admiral's breakfast table, to which it was the custom for the middy on duty at that hour to be invited.

On another occasion, when I was serving on board a corvette, we very nearly got wrecked in a thick fog. The ship left Woosung in clear weather for Hong-Kong, but as we were steaming down the Yangtsi the weather became very thick and we soon ran into a pea-soup fog. The navigating officer, an old veteran, was not at all pleased with the situation, and advised the captain to anchor, but this proposal was scorned. The ship was under orders for England. Anchoring meant delay, and that was not to be thought of, so on

we went, although we couldn't see a dozen yards ahead of the ship.

As time went on the anxiety of our navigating lieutenant increased and his temper rose accordingly. He was restless and uneasy, till at last he could stand it no longer and told the captain that he refused to take any further responsibility in the navigation of the ship. This arbitrary conduct on his part had the desired effect, and the captain gave the order for the ship to anchor.

An hour later the weather cleared and the larger Saddle Island lay right across our course, just one mile distant. Had the anchoring been delayed another ten minutes we would have been on the rocks.

In our old Navy, courage and prompt initiative knew no limits. You never heard the cry of "Man overboard" in those days without officers and men alike vying to go to the rescue.

I remember once when a man fell from the futtock shrouds and knocked another out of the fore-rigging on his way down, both falling into the sea, and so many officers and men jumped after them that the captain and first lieutenant were rushing about threatening dire punishment to anyone else who went overboard. I have known officers who, directly they heard the cry, went straight out of the nearest port without waiting to see where the man was. Falling overboard was pretty constant in the days of masts and yards, and many a poor fellow was drowned, but very rarely without vigorous attempts on behalf of his shipmates to save him.

A very courageous act, with fatal consequences, came to my notice when I was in the *Juno* at Singapore. Four ships of a flying squadron were sailing in company

before the monsoon with studding-sails set both sides. The formation of the squadron was "divisions-in-line-ahead." At five minutes to one in the afternoon, while the watch was at work forward, the midshipman on duty was attending the heaving of the log, to find out the speed of the ship.

This work occupied two reelers, one petty officer and the midshipman. On its completion the line was being hauled in when one of the reelers fell overboard. It was believed that he had his foot on the lower half port, which fell down and precipitated him into the sea. Immediately the other reeler went after him, the petty officer followed the two reelers, and the midshipman went after him. The cry of "Man overboard" was at once raised and a seaman from forward dashed aft and went after the midshipman, so that there were five people in the water. The speed of the ship before the accident was about ten knots. The squadron had been under sail only, and steam was not available, so that all that could be done at the moment was to heave to and lower the lifeboat. This took a little time, so that the ship was a mile dead to leeward of the men in the water before the cutter got clear. The remainder of the squadron continued their course.

The lifebuoy had been let go in good time, and as the whole party in the water had been seen close to and round it, no one at first anticipated the seriousness of the situation. But there was a heavy sea on and the boat's progress was *nil*. From the ship she appeared to go ahead, but that was only because the ship was drifting so rapidly to leeward herself. Both officers and men were aloft watching with glasses and telescopes, but even these could not make out anything in the rough water after the first quarter of an hour.

Doubtless by then the ship was quite two miles from the lifebuoy.

So the time wore on, the lifeboat battling against the rough sea and the ship drifting farther and farther to leeward. Caustic criticisms were heard on every side. Why was steam not raised immediately the accident happened? Why heave to? Why not beat to windward? These were questions which were flying about, but it is not the writer's intention to raise a controversy on that point. It is a long time ago and the matter is better left at rest.

When last seen by the officers aloft, the men in the water were all round the lifebuoy, which was capable of supporting them all. Moreover, the midshipman, who was a perfect glutton at jumping overboard to save life, invariably carried a blow-out collar about with him, and he had been seen to put this round the petty-officer's neck very early in the proceedings. There was, therefore, every reason to hope that the party would remain afloat for several hours.

At three o'clock the Captain considered that the case was hopeless and hoisted the boat's recall. This signal was reluctantly obeyed, and by four o'clock the boat was hoisted up and sail was made to rejoin the squadron.

The agonised feelings of those brave men in the water, when they saw their ship sailing away and leaving them to die, are better not thought about. Nothing was ever heard of them again. The midshipman was the bravest of the brave. He knew no fear. The reckless things he did, which often courted disaster, astounded his messmates to such an extent that some of them thought he was mad to undertake them. But he was sane enough to be the head boy of his

term in the *Britannia* and to pass all his examinations with exceptional brilliancy.

Boys will be boys, and midshipmen are no exception. Although we had a very charming lot of youngsters on board the *Audacious*, there was naturally a trifle of the devil here and there. Amongst our shipmates we had a very good-hearted young marine officer, who was a constant target for the more adventurous spirits of the gunroom. The reason was that he was an easy man to get a rise out of and probably because he used fearful language.

One morning at Nagasaki, when some of our boys were coming off in a sampan after an early bathe, they discovered a tub of live fish in the boat. Someone suggested that it would be a great lark to pour the contents of the tub down the marine officer's scuttle and he would probably think that the end of the world had come. It was a brilliant proposal and was immediately carried out.

In the old ironclads the lower deck cabins were below the water-line and the portholes or scuttles were at a steep angle, for the outside had to be three feet above the water, while the inside was below it. They could only be opened in harbour when the water was quite smooth. Buying the contents of the tub, these young rascals slipped alongside the scuttle, which they knew communicated with the marine officer's cabin, and then poured the fish and water down on top of their unfortunate victim while he was asleep.

I was peacefully reclining in my hammock, just outside his cabin, when I heard the splash of the water and the terrible language which came forth. At first he thought that it was the natural outcome of a rising sea, but the fish puzzled him greatly.

It would all have remained a great mystery if it hadn't been for the young idiots above peeping down the scuttle and chuckling with laughter. Then the fat was in the fire. The atmosphere became literally blue with oaths, and we all became a little apprehensive as to what would happen to the culprits. There were many threats, but after being well chaffed at the wardroom breakfast-table, the gallant major, as we called him, cooled right down and forgave everyone. That evening he was asked to dine in the gunroom for being a good sort.

For a few days after this a truce was proclaimed, but it didn't last long. It was soon noticed that the major had taken to evil ways. He acquired a habit of sleeping on shore and coming off in the morning, a little before eight o'clock, looking rather the worse for wear and very much ashamed of himself. It was thought that it would perhaps enhance his dignity if some special act of honour were shown him on his return to the ship.

It happened that between seven and eight in the morning the midshipmen did an hour's rifle drill on the quarter-deck, and it was decided that a fitting reception might be given to the major when he came in over the gangway. Accordingly, the signal-midshipman was instructed to keep a good look-out for the boat and tip the wink to the rifle squad when it drew near the gangway. It was also arranged that the midshipman, who was drilling the others, should watch the time, and manœuvre his squad so as to be in position opposite the gangway at the right moment.

All went like clockwork, and, as the unsuspecting marine officer came over the side, the order was given

to "present arms" and he was met by a guard of honour with faces like sphinxes, and of whom a royal prince might have been proud.

But not so our soldier. With a look of thunder on his face he rushed below hurling muttered epithets at us as he disappeared down the ladder to his cabin. It was too bad; he had failed to appreciate the delicate attention we had paid him. We were all reported to the commander and got our leave stopped for fourteen days.

During the ensuing weeks there were many discussions as to the line of action that ought to be taken. It was felt that honour would not be satisfied unless severe reprisals were made. Accordingly all the European shops on shore were searched for a little toy soldier which could be used for the required purpose. At last one was found and brought off in triumph to the ship. It was a great success, as it was a perfect model of an officer in artillery uniform, which was an almost exact replica of the one our marine officer wore. The small figure stood about a foot high and the body swung to and fro, balanced above the legs.

Now Sunday morning on board a man-of-war is a day of much pomp and splendour. Every officer and man puts on his best clothes and there is a grand parade, during which the band plays martial and other music.

The Royal Marines were always drawn up on the top of the upper battery, and a very smart lot of men they looked in their dark-blue-and-scarlet uniforms. But the little major was magnificence personified as he approached his detachment at the commencement of the inspection.

On the occasion in question, a moment before the bugle sounded the assembly, a stealthy young officer was seen to dash up from below and place a little figure on the deck six paces in front of the spot where it was estimated that the centre of the detachment would be standing. He had scarcely disappeared when the bugle sounded and the marines commenced to fall in. They were too occupied at first to notice anything until they had been dressed into line by one of the sergeants and stood at ease. Then a titter ran along the front rank as the little wobbling figure was discovered.

Just at that moment the clank of the major's sword was heard, and then in a loud voice he called, " Silence in the ranks." But the humour of the situation was too strong, silence was impossible. At first he could not see what the men were laughing at, and became very angry with them, calling on his non-commissioned officers to restore silence in the ranks. At last, just as he was on the verge of explosion, he caught sight of the cause of his discomfiture, and, with a wild rush and a kick, he sent it flying into the sea.

" Who dared to put that damned thing there ? " he cried out. " I don't know, sir," replied the sergeant-major, " it must have been there before we come."

Luckily none of the marines knew where it came from, so, with the removal of the offensive article, order was restored and the gallant major was soon clanking his sword up and down the deck in front of his men as if nothing had happened, little knowing that from every vantage point a middy's head had watched the whole proceeding, and that they one and all agreed amongst themselves afterwards that honour was more than satisfied.

School on board ship was always rather a difficulty in the old ships. There was no schoolroom. Sometimes the captain gave up his fore-cabin for this purpose, but this was rather the exception than the rule. Usually the school tables were arranged on the half-deck, where numerous attractions drew the attention away from one's work. Besides this, duty always came first and the boat-midshipmen were constantly being taken away.

Another cause of unrest was the issue of rum. All officers, over eighteen years of age, were allowed their tot as well as the men, and this was served to them neat at eleven o'clock. The consequence was that when six bells struck all the senior midshipmen vanished like smoke and returned five minutes later smelling strongly of the West Indian spirit. This didn't help the naval instructor much.

I remember one poor man who simply couldn't fight against his difficulties and gave up trying. He just let us do as we liked, so we had school in the gunroom. We did about half an hour's arithmetic, then decided that we had had enough, cut for a cocktail all round and closed the shop. It all sounds very dreadful now, but amid those surroundings some splendid characters were developed.

Back in the seventies there was plenty of sport around Shanghai, and one winter I spent there in H.M.S. *Thalia* afforded me ample opportunity for using my gun. Snipe and occasional pheasants were found on the racecourse, and between that place and Siccawei, where the ground is now mostly built over, were innumerable cotton fields which gave opportunities for picking up the latter variety of game.

Both sides of the river, down as far as Woosung,

were useful shooting grounds, especially on the Pootung side, and duck were easily obtained in the neighbourhood during a hard winter.

But this kind of sport was promiscuous and entailed fairly hard work to get a small bag. If you wanted good shooting you had to go into the interior for it. The favourite plan was to hire a house-boat and go away for a fortnight. I often saw European-built house-boats returning from these expeditions with immense quantities of game hung round them, including deer, pheasants, geese and ducks. Seven or eight hundred head was quite a normal number.

It naturally filled me with intense delight when I was asked by our senior sub. to join him and a civilian, and go for a ten days' trip up the Soochow creek in a Chinese house-boat. It was not to be an expensive trip, as the craft was only to cost us four dollars a day including the loudah and four men.

We took our own cook and some necessary provisions, trusting to our guns to fill the larder, so the total expenses worked out at about £5 each for the whole expedition.

Our house-boat was quite comfortable. It had a large cabin amidships, which served us for all purposes, and just forward of this was the kitchen. The crew, as is usual in Chinese sampans, slept beneath the deck flooring. We took our bedding with us and spread it on the boards, on which we also sat for meals when in our cabin. There was a table in the centre which filled up the remaining space. All very primitive, but good enough for young sportsmen out to enjoy themselves.

Our start was made at night and we were propelled either by the big oar or yuloe in the stern, or by two

of our crew towing us by means of a long line on the towpath. The *modus operandi* was to travel by night and shoot by day, but we could not quite trust our crew, for they invariably tied up the house-boat as soon as they found we had all gone to sleep. However, although we did not go as far afield as we wanted to, we struck new ground each day, which was something.

The first day out we did not find much to shoot, so continued our journey and passed around the city of Soochow. The natives were none too friendly, so we were glad to get out into the open country again. From here to Changchow, on the grand canal, we found a fair amount of game.

The weather was frosty, for it was January, but warm in the sun, and I was foolish enough to be taken in by it. Feeling quite hot after a sharp walk I thought the water looked tempting, and pulling off my clothes jumped in. It took me exactly three seconds to recover the shock and get on board again. The temperature was two degrees above freezing-point.

We saw several of the little hog-deer about and shot two of them. They run a little bigger than roe-deer, but have no horns, just small tusks like a boar, hence the name. China has been called a vast graveyard, and this is true to a certain extent. Little mounds, often grown over with bushes, are scattered everywhere, and where several of these were grouped together you would generally find pheasants. I have put up twenty birds at once in one of these places.

Usually round the walls of old cities there were many tombs and game was often abundant. Outside Changchow we struck some marshy ground which

yielded us several mallard. But we were somewhat handicapped by having no dogs, and by being very inexperienced young sportsmen.

The civilian who was with us had probably never fired a gun before, as he knew nothing about the etiquette of shooting. When we were walking in line, the moment a bird was flushed, he forged ahead in order to get the next shot, and so often spoilt my shooting that at last I could stand it no longer. This man had got about one hundred yards ahead of me as we were walking in line, when a pheasant got up between us and I just let him have it. I knew the distance was safe, and his back was towards me, so there was no danger in peppering him up a bit. He wasn't hit, but my shot fell all round him and gave him a great fright. He yelled at me immediately and told me I had shot him ; but I just replied that it served him right for not keeping in line. He never transgressed again.

Our trip home didn't take us long, as our Chinamen were anxious to get back, and we travelled night and day. It was altogether a great adventure for a boy of sixteen, but a little more comfort in the shape of an English house-boat, and a better hunting ground, would appeal more to a man of mature age.

While lying off Singapore in the *Juno*, one of our midshipmen had a very unfortunate experience, but which afforded many of his shipmates a vast amount of amusement. The boy in question had got himself into difficulties with his tailor and, being a long way from home, was unable to get the account settled.

The patience of the outfitter being strained to the breaking-point, the senior representative of the establishment went off to interview the young delinquent.

The ship lay two miles off the shore and the expedition was made in a one-man sampan, which rather went to show the thrifty nature of the party concerned.

It happened to be my afternoon watch, when I heard an altercation at the gangway between the marine corporal (who, by the way, was my servant) and a diminutive civilian who had just come over the starboard gangway. I walked forward to see what the trouble was just as the little man went below to find his quarry.

In reply to my question as to what the noise was all about, the corporal said he had just been telling a tailor that he had no business to come up the starboard side, as it was reserved for officers, and that when he left the ship he would have to go away from the port side. Now there was no accommodation ladder on the port side, so our little friend objected strongly to the climb up the steps on the ship's side, and he vehemently protested against what he thought was a gross injustice.

While I was discussing this nice point the first lieutenant appeared on the scene and asked what was wrong. I told him what had happened, and he told the corporal that on no account was the man to be allowed to use the starboard side when he left the ship.

About a quarter of an hour later the civilian appeared from below and at once went to the starboard gangway for his boat, but seeing it was not there, went over the port side and hailed the man in Chinese to come round to the ladder.

The corporal then took up his position at the top of the accommodation ladder and barred the way, and the first lieutenant, who was ever on the *qui*

vive, dashed up to the gangway and asked the tailor what the devil he meant by not conforming to the orders of the ship. A battle royal ensued, the tailor refusing to use the steps on the port side of the ship. The master-at-arms was sent for and arrived on the scene puffing like a grampus, for he was a very fat man.

The tailor then made a rush for the ladder, when the corporal was off his guard, and reaching the bottom step took hold of the foremost galley's fall, then becketted to the ship's side, and tried to swing himself into the sampan. All this time the first lieutenant was threatening the sampan man with instant death if he dared to come alongside the ladder. The fat master-at-arms reached the bottom step of the ladder hot on the trail, and succeeded in getting hold of the little tailor's right leg as he hung over the water.

This condition of affairs lasted for nearly five minutes, during which the tailor threatened to let go and fall into the sea. At last the sampan got close to the ship, and kicking himself free of the master-at-arms, the little man dropped into it and immediately the Chinaman made off clear of the ship, and, hoisting his sail, steered for the shore. This was an unexpected *dénouement*.

The duty cutter's crew were at once piped to man their boat and go in chase. Now as luck would have it, the midshipman of the duty cutter was the very boy whom the tailor had come off to interview for not having paid his bill, and he was ordered to go and bring back the sampan with the tailor in it, alive or dead.

Was there ever such an irony of fate?

Meanwhile during the manning of the cutter, the

sampan was making good progress to the shore, and the first lieutenant was getting more and more infuriated with the delay in getting the boat manned. The wind was blowing off the land and the sampan had to make several tacks before she could reach the pier.

The cutter was under oars and the midshipman deemed it expedient to follow her on each tack, instead of pulling direct to windward and cutting her off. This was probably done intentionally by the midshipman, because he was an unwilling actor in the play.

It had, however, a very disconcerting effect on our first lieutenant. I never saw a man get so enraged. Signal after signal was hoisted to the cutter, until the boy in charge was at his wit's end to know what to do, while the first lieutenant literally foamed at the mouth and swore like a trooper. At last the signals had their desired effect and the cutter succeeded in capturing the sampan a few yards off the pier, and brought it back in triumph to the ship. Right alongside the starboard gangway the sampan was brought and up the side came the tailor, where a file of marines met him and at once took him in charge. Now I must say here that the captain of the ship was on shore, staying at Government House, or perhaps this story would never have been written.

The prisoner was fallen in on the quarter-deck with a stalwart marine on either side and a corporal behind him, and then he was brought up before the first lieutenant. The former was pale with rage and indignation, while the latter was at purple heat and spitting fire at every pore. I confess I was never so amused in my life at what followed. The first lieutenant being a broad-shouldered, heavy-made

man, with a ferocious red beard, the hairs of which stood out like priming wires whenever he was enraged, while the puny little individual opposite him, though trembling in every limb, seemed fearless in his wrath and declined to be bullied into submission.

"How dare you come on board one of Her Majesty's ships and create a disturbance like this?" roared our No. 1.

"How dare you treat me as if I was a dog?" shrieked the prisoner.

"I'll teach you to obey the orders of the ship."

"And I'll teach you not to treat a gentleman like this."

"Gentleman indeed," cried the first lieutenant.

"Yes, gentleman indeed, sir, which is more than you are."

"How dare you insult me on board my own ship, sir?" bellowed No. 1.

"I wish to see your captain, sir."

"That you can't do, as he is not on board."

"Then I will wait on board till he comes."

"You will do nothing of the kind."

"Yes, I will."

"If you're not careful I will have you seized up to the main rigging and give you four dozen."

"I'd like to see you try it," yelled the little tailor.

After about twenty minutes of this sort of thing the first lieutenant ordered the guard to remove the prisoner and put him in his boat. He was at once hustled to the port gangway and forced down the side into his sampan.

Meanwhile the whole ship's company were on deck watching the sport, and as the little man went off in his boat they indulged in poking fun at him, which

so angered him that he stood up in his sampan and shaking his fist at the ship swore he would summons everybody on board.

What steps were taken when he got on shore I do not know, but when the captain came back from Government House two days later, there was a secret enquiry in his cabin. We midshipmen were not allowed to know what transpired, but it was generally understood that the matter was peacefully settled by the first lieutenant making a full and ample apology to his victim.

CHAPTER V

PIRATE YARNS

DURING the latter half of the nineteenth century piratical attacks in the China seas were common enough. The mouth of the Canton River swarmed with pirates before the seventies, but after that they were kept more in hand by the authorities, and their attacks on Europeans became less frequent. The Chinese had quite a large fleet of man-of-war junks which were supposed to keep down piracy. These pseudo-police craft were not above doing a bit of piracy on their own account when a safe opportunity occurred, but were more for effect than practical use. The professional pirate feared them not.

It used to amuse me, when I was a midshipman, to see these war junks lying in Hong-Kong harbour, in the man-of-war anchorage, all spick and span, with their 3-pounder muzzle-loaders on each side of the upper deck. The precision with which they got out their lower booms and accommodation ladder (two steps) with the letting go of the first anchor was most comical. Everything too was beautifully kept and spotlessly clean, but I never heard of their heroic deeds. Perhaps like Bobs they didn't advertise, but there is no knowing.

Hong-Kong was a curious place in those days. It

was full of scoundrels of every type, but they only hatched their plots there. Occasionally a very daring coup was brought off in its neighbourhood, but as a rule the British force of Chinese water-police were too wide-awake to make it worth the risk. The safest ground to work in was among the many islands not under British jurisdiction, the villages of which were full of law-breakers, who sympathised strongly with the pirates.

When I was quite a small boy, long before I joined the Navy, I stayed with my parents at the house of the manager of the Whampoa Docks. He had some small children with whom I played. At the end of our visit, the manager and his wife returned to Hong-Kong with us, leaving his children behind in charge of the Chinese ayah. Two days later, the place was attacked by pirates. The faithful servants put up a good fight, but were all cut to pieces. The ayah managed to save the children, but the house was soaked in blood and everything worth taking was stolen when the parents answered the call to return at once, which was sent down the river by a special messenger. The pirates had expected to capture a lot of money, but, fortunately, the manager had taken it all with him to bank at Hong-Kong when he left Whampoa just before the attack. These ruffians were never caught that I heard of.

Perhaps the most barefaced bit of piracy that has ever been perpetuated in the China seas, occurred in the nineties. The plot was very cunningly planned and worked out at Hong-Kong, to capture one of the China coast steamers, belonging to a British firm, immediately after her departure from harbour, on her way up the coast. The number of Chinese connected

with this enterprise must have been very great, as it was arranged that a number of junks should meet the steamer near Pedro Blanco, a rock sixty miles or so from Hong-Kong, and this should be the time when the pirates travelling on board the steamer as ordinary passengers would seize the vessel by force and transfer her cargo to the junks.

Certain precautions were taken in these steamers to guard against external attack by keeping an arm-rack of rifles and ammunition always handy, but the Chinese soon found out that it would not be a very difficult task to overmaster the defence if they were once on board in force.

The steamer was a moderate-sized one of between two and three thousand tons and was commanded by a very fine British sailor. She had a full list of Chinese passengers and a few Europeans travelling in the first-class saloon. Fifteen or more of the pirates had secured passages forward and had mingled, unsuspected, amongst the harmless natives who were on their way up to the northern ports.

All went peacefully until Pedro Blanco came in sight right ahead, and the co-operating junks were made out to be in their assigned position. The pirates then rushed the bridge, murdered the captain and gained complete command of the ship, after a struggle in which the European officers and passengers were completely overpowered. There were several casualties among the defenders, and those who survived were secured and locked up so that they could not interfere further in the plan of operations. The ship's course was then altered so as to take the vessel out of the track of steamers. The junks were then called alongside, and the ship was stopped, while as much

of the cargo as was desired was transferred to them.

This occupied some hours, after which the pirates boarded the junks, and, clearing away with their spoil, disappeared into the night. As soon as they were all gone the captives were quickly released, and, under command of one of the ship's officers, the vessel returned to Hong-Kong and sent in a full report of the tragedy to the authorities.

Strong representations were made to the Viceroy at Canton with little or no effect, and months passed without any news being forthcoming of the capture of any of the pirates. At last a strong note was sent to the Chinese Government at Peking demanding the immediate dismissal of the Viceroy unless steps were at once taken to deal with the principals of the outrage. This action had its immediate effect. Seventeen prisoners were sent down to Kowloon City, near Hong-Kong, and were duly executed for piracy on the high seas ; but whether they actually were the real pirates or not was a matter of doubt, as the Chinese authorities were quite capable of providing substitutes when pressed to produce the perpetrators of crime. However, it was generally believed that some if not all of this band of ruffians had received the justice they so richly deserved.

Kowloon City at this time was in Chinese territory and was well known as a gambling resort, where the game of putzi was played. Europeans used to run across there for a flutter, from Hong-Kong, and the place was quite popular. Sunday was a favourite day for this recreation, but the gambling houses were constantly open and fairly well patronised during weekdays as well. Steam launches ran between the two places and gambling started on board

them the moment they left the pier at Hong-Kong.

One fine day, when the usual visitors to Kowloon City were seated round the putzi tables, great excitement began amongst the Chinese and several of them left. Then it got whispered about that two Chinese gunboats had arrived off the city and that there was going to be an execution, so the gambling stopped and everyone went down to the beach to see what was going to happen. The gunboats were anchored close to the pier, and the crew were busy landing their prisoners. Most of these were able to walk, but one or two of them were so overcome with funk, or opium, probably the latter, that they had to be carried up to the execution ground in baskets.

Just to the westward of the city was one of those old mud forts so typical of China, and beyond it was a small sandy beach, above which was a strip of short grass about a hundred yards long and twenty-five yards deep. The prisoners were conducted to this little patch of green and placed in position about five yards apart with their backs to the sea. Each had his hands tied behind his back and squatted in the Oriental kneeling fashion. The chief of the gang of pirates occupied the central position. When all was ready the mandarin came out of the mud fort, accompanied by his guard of Chinese soldiers and followed by the executioner and his assistants. The charge and sentence having been read, the executioner was ordered to proceed with his duty, and the ghastly performance began.

Taking a sword from one of his assistants he stepped up abreast of the first prisoner in the line, while another assistant adjusted the unfortunate man's position and a third kept his head out by means of his pigtail,



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EXECUTION OF SEVENTEEN CHINESE PIRATES, 1891.

the short, knife-like sword was lifted and brought down with a sharp downward cut which severed the neck. The head rolled to the ground and the body fell forward on the grass, while the executioner moved off to his next victim. One or two of the prisoners had to be held up to receive the death-blow, but the chief pirate was a man of no fear and bore himself bravely ; turning to the executioner as he approached, he told him that when they met in the next world he would equalise matters and have his revenge.

The executioner took a fresh sword after every third blow and practically made a clean cut each time. The whole execution was over in ten minutes, but it must have seemed an interminably long ten minutes to the man who was the last in the line and had to watch all the other heads fall before it came to his turn.

As soon as the last man was executed, the officials withdrew and the bodies were all left as they lay. The heads were collected and placed in two washing baskets, where they remained for some days before being hung up in little square cages on a line with the usual notices attached, stating why they had been removed from their owners. The bodies were removed for burial the day after the execution.

Amongst the Chinese themselves this event did not create more than a passing excitement. The moment it was over they all returned to the gambling dens and went on as if nothing had happened.

Running a ship on shore is never a very pleasant incident in a sailor's career, but when it was done on the China coast there was always some danger of an attack ; not necessarily from professional pirates, but from ordinary trading junks.

It was quite remarkable how soon after the grounding of a steamer these junks would begin to collect in the neighbourhood. They seemed to come from every direction, just like vultures when they scent their prey.

It is curious how in all countries there have been men ready to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor sailor who has come to grief. There have been numerous incidents around our own coasts in recent years, and it is not half a century ago since St. George's Bay at Bermuda was the centre of a gang who ought all to have been hanged.

There was a syndicate there, who had their own pilots, who deliberately ran ships ashore so that they might be auctioned and bought in for a few hundred pounds. They were then refloated and repaired and sent to sea as good as new.

In the China seas it was part of the native's creed to make all he could out of a shipwrecked mariner. Some years ago, long before the Japanese took over the island of Formosa, hardly anyone ever escaped who got wrecked there.

The island was then mostly inhabited by very wild people, split up into tribes, who were hostile to everyone. The Chinese were supposed to own the island, but they had no authority over the natives whatever. The Japanese now have them fairly well in hand; but it has cost them a heavy price to do it. For its size Formosa is one of the most valuable islands in the world.

Around the Malay coast there used to be a number of pirates when I was a midshipman, both Chinese and Malay. A naval captain once told me of an experience of his which is interesting. A Malay crew had captured

and murdered the crew of a Chinese junk, but she had been caught by one of our gunboats and the culprits had been condemned to death.

The British captain had been ordered to see the execution carried out in the vicinity of the spot where the incident took place. It happened in the mouth of a small river on the western coast and there the prisoners were taken. Being Malays they were ordered to be creased in the Malay fashion. My friend told me that it was the most horrible sight he ever witnessed.

The two executioners were Malays and the creasing was carried out by stabbing each man down through the left shoulder with a Malay crease. It took a quarter of an hour to carry it out, and those who were waiting their turn implored the British captain to pardon them.

The executioners were clumsy fellows and did their work very badly. Only in one case was a man killed outright, and several men were kicking about on the ground for some minutes and had to be put out of their agony by the Marine guard.

There were a dozen prisoners who had to be disposed of in this way, and it is really a wonder that any Englishman could be found to witness such a scene. I am certain I should have stopped the execution after the first man had been so brutally treated.

I remember the captain of a Chinese customs gunboat telling me that he had seen a man buried up to the neck in lime and kept like that till he died. I asked him to tell me about it.

It appears that he was anchored near the shore at Amoy, and a Chinese boatman, who had murdered one of his passengers, was sentenced to this awful death. In all cases in China of that nature the punish-

ment was carried out near the place where the offence took place. He actually saw the whole business from his ship, and watched the man die. I asked him why he allowed it.

"Oh," said he, "I couldn't interfere or I would have lost my job."

"Well," I said, "job or no job, I would never have allowed such a fearful thing to happen before my eyes, even if it cost me my life to stop it."

CHAPTER VI

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

AS I have said before, the sailors of the old sailing days were a pretty tough lot. They were splendid fellows, and courageous to a fault, but they were mighty difficult to handle at times. The result was that some of the officers were terrible disciplinarians. It was quite common for an officer, who was one of the kindest-hearted of men amongst his own folk on shore, to be an exceptionally hard nut on board his ship. Present-day conditions make it very difficult to understand why this was necessary, for the modern Navy works with clock-like precision and is not governed by the exciting influences which pervaded the atmosphere of a man-of-war in the days of masts and yards.

There were some very rough characters in the Navy at that time, who got terribly drunk and riotous during the monthly leave and simply did not care what they did. The punishments for leave-breaking were much as they are to-day, only more severe, and had no effect whatever, so one had to make the best of it ; but when drunkenness led to insubordination and brutal assault, measures had to be taken to maintain discipline which would be strongly disapproved of to-day.

Long terms of imprisonment were common sentences,

and where the man was incorrigible he ran the risk of being flogged.

It is many years since flogging was done away with in the Navy, and there are very few officers left on the active list who have ever witnessed one. We are apt to judge our predecessors too harshly sometimes, because we do not readily appreciate the difficulties which they had to deal with. We think that flogging was unwarranted, and no doubt it is true, but we must remember that some of the men in the old days feared no punishment short of death, unless it was flogging.

I remember one case of a cutter's crew being annoyed with their midshipman, so they just chucked him overboard, and he would have been drowned if he hadn't been picked up by a passing shore-boat. There used to be many cases of sailors, when drunk on shore, committing all manner of diabolical crimes which are unheard-of in the Navy of to-day. Striking superior officers was a common complaint, and there was no way of checking it except by violent measures. Flogging was a terrible punishment, and it was a great mercy when it was abolished, but this only became possible when education brought a more refined class of bluejacket into the Navy. I only saw one flogging, but that was quite enough for me, and the memory of it I will carry to my grave.

I was serving on the Singapore station in 1876, in a corvette called the *Juno*, when a seaman, who had given a great deal of trouble on board a gunboat, was sent to us for custody until his case had been gone into by the admiral, who at the time was at a remote part of the station. He was placed under the charge of a sentry, and one day, without the smallest provocation, struck the corporal, who was taking him his

dinner, a severe blow behind the ear and knocked him senseless. His only excuse was that he wanted to get out of the Navy. The case was reported to the admiral by telegraph and the reply came that the man was to be given four dozen with the cat-o'-nine-tails.

A flogging was always carried out in the Navy with much ceremony. It was held on the quarter-deck in the presence of the captain, the officers and all the ship's company. First of all the gratings were rigged. These consisted of cross wooden gratings, supplied for placing over open hatchways when they were temporarily closed, either for drill purposes or for battening down in bad weather. Three or four of these were up-ended and lashed to the nettings abreast of the main rigging, and to this framework the unfortunate man was secured, his wrists and ankles being tied to it with canvas strips. Just abaft the gratings stood the captain and all the officers, wearing cocked hats and swords. Close to the prisoner stood the doctor and his assistant, the latter holding a glass of water in his hand. Just behind them was the master-at-arms, who counted the strokes in a solemn voice. Forward of this group were the boatswain's mates, who each gave a dozen strokes in turn, by seniority. On the opposite side of the deck the marines were drawn up with fixed bayonets, while clustered across the deck and round the main-mast were the ship's company.

It was at 6.30 a.m., just after the hammocks had been stowed, that the preliminary preparations were made. The "Officer's call" and the "Marines fall in" were sounded on the bugle, and the boatswain's mates piped "All hands to muster on the quarter-deck to witness punishment." This brought us all up to

our positions, and I confess to a feeling of anxious fear at what I was about to see. The men having been reported all present, the prisoner was brought up from below, stripped to his trousers and fastened to the gratings. Two padded belts were then placed round him, one to protect his neck and the other to cover the small of his back, leaving about eight to ten inches of his bare back between the padded belts. The captain read the warrant and then said, "Boatswain's mates, do your duty," on which the senior one took the cat from the green baize bag, which was held by the boatswain, and stepped up into position.

For those who have never seen a cat-o'-nine-tails an explanation of one may not be out of place. It consisted of a short wooden handle, about twelve inches long, usually covered with baize, to one end of which were fastened nine pieces of cod-line, each about twenty inches long. There were no knots on these whatever, the end of each tail being whipped with twine.

I remember being very much impressed with the behaviour of our skipper. The proper captain of the ship was in hospital, so we had a commander lent to us for the time from another ship. He was a very kind-hearted little man, and it was very apparent that this experience was pain and anguish to him. He trembled all over and was ghastly pale the moment the first stroke was laid on. Although the rest of us did not show it so much, I am sure we all felt it nearly as badly.

At first the blows only produced red lines on the white flesh, but before the first dozen was completed there was a distinct swelling and blood was drawn. One wondered how the boatswain's mates could do it at all, but it was astounding how each one of them laid

it on with every ounce of strength he was capable of using. The sufferer was a brave man and stood his punishment splendidly. He winced a little as the blows descended on him, but no cry came from his lips till the second dozen was completed, and then he was given a drink of water.

But now comes the terrible part of this story. The third boatswain's mate was left-handed and his blows cut across those of his predecessors with horrible results. The swollen flesh became quite black and I could see holes in it the size of a finger-top. The sight was dreadful, and it was at this moment that there was a loud clatter as one of the Marine guard fainted and fell with his rifle and bayonet to the deck.

I will not go farther. Enough has been said to enable my readers to picture what a naval flogging was. To have had to watch one was the most dreadful experience of my naval life. When it was all over the man was taken down to the sick bay and attended to by the doctor. I noticed that he walked forward with a firm step and an upright body. Whatever his faults, he was a splendid specimen of British manhood. Two days later he voluntarily went to his duty and never gave any trouble again. Our poor commander was in tears before the end, and I was very sorry for him, for he was powerless to do otherwise than carry out the orders of his commander-in-chief.

The loss of life through inattention, slackness, drunkenness and other similar causes was so great that officers had to train themselves to be as quick as lightning in their decisions, and this naturally led to loss of temper on both sides. There was much greater rivalry between ships of a squadron then than there is

now, for the spirit of emulation was tremendous, especially amongst the men. The smartest ship in the fleet could not attain that honour without a heavy death roll. I have heard it said that one ship of the Channel fleet, whose commander was the smartest officer of his time, lost on an average one man a month during her three years' commission. That is probably an exaggeration, but accidents were very constant.

To give an example of a bad case. A fleet with yards manned was lying at anchor when a foreign man-of-war left the harbour with a high official on board. The departing ship was caught by the tide and fouled one of the anchored ships as she crossed her bows, carrying away the latter's jib-boom. This brought down the fore top-gallant mast and the ten men who were standing on the upper yards. They were all killed.

During drill aloft in wet weather accidents were frequent through the men slipping. Severe cold, which numbed the fingers, also led to trouble. The letting go of the wrong rope, a sudden squall, an unexpected shift of wind, or the parting of a sheet or tack were all factors which had their dangerous consequences. In short, the life was one of such constant danger that measures had to be taken which cannot be judged by those who live under the methodical conditions of to-day.

The training of an officer under these strenuous conditions took a considerable number of years, because of the experience required to make him a complete master of naval seamanship, and to render him capable of dealing instantly with unexpected situations whenever they arose. It was very seldom that perfection was reached with the officers before the rank of

commander, and with the men until they had had several years' experience as petty officers.

Amongst the offences drunkenness was the cause of nearly all the serious crimes. There was a great deal of leave-breaking and rowdiness on shore, which was occasioned by it, while on board ship the pernicious habit of using a short measure for serving out the rum ration, in order that the cook of the mess could have the surplus, ensured the fact that every afternoon a certain number of the ship's company were "half-seas-over."

They generally arranged to sleep this off, but if the hands were turned up suddenly about 2.30 p.m., as often as not some act of insubordination took place, or, what was much worse, there was some accident aloft. The authorities tried over and over again to break the men of this dangerous habit. It was no use, the evil could not be stamped out.

There was a great deal of smuggling liquor on board too, which was often cleverly done and consequently very difficult to check. For instance, if the band went on shore to attend a funeral, as likely as not the trombone would return full of "good old Jamaica."

Slackness aloft, disobedience and minor cases of insubordination were inevitable where a state of such high pressure invariably existed, and were usually dealt with lightly, but there was one unpardonable sin, which every officer abominated, and that was squirting baccy juice about over a spotlessly clean ship. The great splash of yellow liquid on the white paintwork nearly drove the first lieutenant or commander mad. Often it was put there out of sheer devilment. Most of the men chewed tobacco, and so

one can readily understand that dirty and careless individuals were constant offenders.

The legal punishments of the day were not considered suitable for many of the crimes, so it was a common practice to invent some that were. For instance, if a man became an habitual offender he was sentenced to carry a spittoon tied round his neck for so many hours a day, with a notice inviting the men to make use of it. There was always a strong sense of humour in a ship's company, and, moreover, the offence was one which was not approved of by the better class men, so very little consideration was shown to the offender. A few days of the ridicule which followed was a far better cure than any legal punishment could have been.

Sailors who washed their clothes or hammocks during improper hours were often made to carry them on a long pole until they got dry. When the washed article was a blanket it was no light punishment.

Slackness aloft was usually dealt with at the moment; in individual cases, by giving the man a run over the masthead to waken him up a bit, and, where a group of men were concerned, in making them repeat the evolution which was in hand.

Slackness on deck, especially at night, was dealt with differently. If a youngster missed his muster frequently the whole of his part of the ship or section were fallen in and told to find the absentee. Not many minutes later shrieks were heard and a terrified youth came rushing aft, with an angry pack at his heels, crying for mercy. This was usually a very efficacious cure when all milder forms of punishment failed.

The excuses made by the men were sometimes

most amusing ; but they had hard nuts to deal with, and it took some ingenuity for a guilty man to escape conviction. When a man was up for being drunk on shore, he almost invariably said he had only had one glass. At first I wondered at the constancy of the lie, but the light came to me one night when I was at a St. Andrew's dinner and an able seaman sat on my right hand. The whisky bottle being passed round, he filled his tumbler to within an inch of the top and added about a wineglassful of water. Before he had time to finish his glass I had made my excuses and left. The next forenoon he was found in the neighbourhood of his previous night's revelries and was duly run in. He had only had one glass.

I remember being a witness to the following investigation. A man was brought up before his captain for being drunk on his return from leave.

"What have you got to say?" enquired the captain.

"If you please, sir, I only had one glass," was the reply.

"Then you must have been drugged."

"Yes, sir, I must have been drugged."

"Do you know where you had this drink?"

"Well, sir, I don't exactly remember," was the cautious reply.

"Oh, but if you only had one glass, surely you can remember where you got it?"

"Well, sir, I went to a good many public-houses last night, and I don't remember which one it was."

"Of course, if you could remember which public-house it was, I could prosecute the publican for drugging you."

The artful sailor was beginning to scent danger, so

he said he was afraid he couldn't remember where he had been.

He was let off with a caution.

There is rather a good story about a sailor who asked permission to go ashore and bury his mother. He obtained the necessary permit and had his holiday. A couple of weeks later he was unfortunate enough to lose his father, but he had no difficulty in getting what leave he required to attend the funeral. This second success filled him with hope for the future, but he thought it better to allow a reasonable time to elapse before putting in another request.

At last the temptation for a run on the beach was too strong, and he began to wonder whether it would be best to give the father or the mother a second funeral. Being unable to make up his mind he tossed up and the father won. So in went the application in the usual form, and the commander asked no questions and let him go.

This further success made him bolder, and a week later he buried his father for the third time. This time, however, he had been rather nervous about results, and in thinking matters over afterwards he decided that the safety limit had been reached in the father's case and that it would be unwise to resurrect him again. It was some time since his mother had been buried, so it was very unlikely that the former request would be remembered. The commander was, however, much wider awake than he was given credit for, and when the request came up before him he said, "Look here, my man, there is no natural limit to the number of fathers you may have ; but, damn it, it is quite impossible for you to have more than one mother. The request is refused."

I remember once when a Marine bugler came to me and asked for leave because his mother was very ill. I telegraphed to the local police and asked them to report the woman's condition, reply paid.

A few hours later I was informed that the good lady was in perfect health, so the young Marine got ashore all right, but he didn't see his mother.

As a rule, punishments were difficult to carry out in small ships. Placing men in confinement was almost out of the question and was never attempted unless it was absolutely necessary. The offender had either to be let off, or sent to a big ship where there was proper cell accommodation.

In some small ships, where the men were happy and there were no bad hats, there were very few offences. I have known such a ship run a whole quarter without any punishments at all. On the other hand, I remember one big vessel that had over forty warrants in a month.

Of course there were cases of cruel punishments, but they were few and far between and were generally inflicted by officers who were more or less mad. There was the notorious case of the captain who triced a man up by his thumbs, with his feet just touching the ground, but the Admiralty dealt with him.

He didn't repeat the offence, as he was promptly told his services were no longer required. But in the old days before wireless had been invented there must have been cases of cruelty that never came to light.

I remember coming on board my ship one night about 11 p.m., and upon asking where the commanding officer was I was told that he was on the forecastle dealing with a drunken man. I went forward at once to see what was happening, and I found that he had

handcuffed the offender round the bower cable and had put a wet swab under his head.

I promptly gave the lieutenant a piece of my mind and released the man, who very soon went to sleep. The lieutenant seemed surprised when I told him that I would never allow him to be commanding officer of the ship again.

During my career in the Navy I liked the men and, although I have had to punish them frequently as part of my duty, I have never in my life had to report a man for being insubordinate or impertinent to me. I have lost my temper with them frequently, but never once has a man shown me any resentment.

They seemed to understand that I was their friend at heart, and they quickly forgave me if I got angry in the excitement of the moment.

I have met some splendid men in the Navy. I have no doubt that there are just as good now, but in the days of open decks and sail drill it was easier to get to know the men individually. When we paid off the *Audacious* in 1879, after a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -year commission in China, I nearly wept when I said good-bye to the ship's company.

With the exception of the engine-room staff, I knew every man by name in the ship, and I have often mustered the watch by memory without ever looking at the watch bill.

I have always been a great believer in long commissions since then, as it adds so much to the efficiency of a ship when the officers can address their men by name. It means a much stronger brotherhood, less crime and better supervision.

During our first two years in China we had strings of defaulters every day. The third year showed a

marked improvement, and during the fourth we practically had no crime at all. After that life was "one glad song," and we all wished it could have lasted for ever.

In my early days commissions were supposed to last three years, but they were often much longer on remote stations. The Admiralty very seldom woke up to the fact that a ship required a relief until she had been fully three years abroad. Then a successor had to be got ready, and, if there were rumours of war in the air, delays frequently occurred.

The cause of the *Audacious*' long commission was trouble with Russia. It was the usual difficulty with the Afghan frontier which went on for years.

It was quite amusing how we followed the Russian flagship *Bayan* about in 1878. We were on the verge of war and there was only one telegraph line which supplied the whole station with its news. The Russians were so mysterious in their movements that we grew very suspicious.

I remember one morning at Yokohama there was the wildest excitement on board the *Audacious* because smoke was seen coming out of the *Bayan*'s funnel. Our admiral (Charles Hillyar) flew up to Tokio by the early train to see the British Minister, while our flagship got up steam for full speed. It used to take six hours.

At 6 a.m. the *Bayan* went to sea. At 11 a.m. the admiral returned from Tokio and the *Audacious* got under way and followed her. Every steamer that was passed was asked if any Russian men-of-war had been seen, and by this means we traced the Russian flagship to Kobe, and anchored there right alongside her.

The *Bayan* was a wooden corvette with a light armament, while the *Audacious* was an ironclad carrying ten 9-inch rifled Woolwich guns, so there was no comparison between the two ships.

I don't think the Russians liked it much, but beyond this game of hide-and-seek nothing much happened. Even as a midshipman I thought it was a silly sort of business.

Of course we heard nothing of our relief while the Russian dispute was on, but it is curious that no one cared then except the married men. All the bachelors were keen on staying out as long as possible, and most of us were unmarried.

We had an excellent band on the flagship, which played dance music for the men once or twice a week in the upper battery. I used to love going there to watch the men dancing. They usually danced with bare feet and only wore their trousers and flannels. On a hot night it was a warm business, as they gripped each other with both arms in an affectionate manner. The jazz hug wasn't in it.

I can see them now chasséing into the centre of the deck, and then chasséing back to the waterways, and then waltzing their partners round during the schottische. They were so serious about it, too, but they certainly danced beautifully.

Of course we midshipmen all had our favourites amongst the sailors. A masthead middy would be certain to make chums with the upper yardmen if he was of any use. These men were the cream of the service and risked their lives every time they went aloft.

In the *Audacious*, Frank Garforth was the midshipman of the maintop, and the writer held the same

position in the foretop, so there was intense rivalry in all drills as to which mast would finish first.

It began with a race up the rigging to see who would reach the top first, and it ended in the race back to the deck again after the work was over. Frank Garforth was a much smarter boy than I was, so he generally beat me ; but he was such a splendid little fellow that I only wanted to be equal with him. My ambition did not go beyond that.

I have never during all my career met with such a perfect specimen of a young sailor. He was not brilliant at school, but in his work at sea he shone as brilliantly as the sun. He was a warm favourite in his own mess, in the wardroom and on the lower deck amongst the sailors. It is very sad to relate that this delightful personality was destroyed by the cruel hand of death before he reached middle age. He is buried in that pretty little cemetery near the dockyard at Bermuda.

We had some splendid men amongst our petty officers ; the chief boatswain's mate, whose name was Moffat, was the life and soul of the lower deck and a great favourite with the midshipmen, who picked up wrinkles in seamanship from him. In those days a man in his position was probably the finest seaman in the ship, and more depended upon him than on any other person for the smartness and cleanliness of the vessel.

Our midshipmen were all very happy and were treated very kindly by the officers in the wardroom. I have often been in ships where the boys didn't have very happy lives and where they have been worked off their legs, but there was nothing of that kind in the *Audacious*.

There is an old stave which goes something like this :—

“ While we poor midns walk the quarter-decks,
With the rain and hail coming down our necks,
Not a sup nor a bite do we get at all,
But it's ‘ damn your eyes ’ at every haul.”

It was very often like that in the old days ; but I am glad to say I didn't often come across it.

We had a charming gunroom, which was light and airy. When we first went to China we had twenty-seven members in it, which was rather too many, so I got appointed away to a corvette as I was the junior member and did not appreciate being called “ Boots ” and having to bunk out of the mess to make room for anyone who was senior to myself.

I served six months in the *Thalia* until she went home, when I was turned over to her relief, the *Juno*, which I found so uncomfortable that I got taken back to the *Audacious* again. By this time several members had gone home and there was plenty of room in the mess. After that everything was *couleur de rose*.



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A TYPICAL TAR.

Moffat, the chief boatswain's mate of the *Audacious*.

CHAPTER VII

STUDIES IN BLACK-AND-WHITE

THERE is perhaps more amusement to be got out of the West Indian niggers than out of any other race in the world. Their sense of humour is so strong that it is very infectious and puts one on good terms with them at once. Nothing delights the black population of one of our islands more than to see a battalion of sailors with a band, marching through one of their streets. It always causes the wildest enthusiasm, especially among the ladies, who turn out in hundreds and march excitedly on either side of the gallant tars.

I remember once at St. Kitts, when I was the captain of the leading company, having a buxom black wench on either arm as I returned with the battalion from the drill ground to the landing-place. It was useless protesting or throwing them off, one just had to accept the situation and make the best of it. It would have been cruel to wound the susceptibilities of such a well-meaning and good-natured crowd, so I just let the girls do as they liked and joined in their merry laughter. It was all very innocent, and when we reached our boats the crowd fell back and gave us room to embark, sending up a hearty cheer as we left the shore.

There is something very attractive about a nigger's smile, and the merry twinkle in the eye of a dusky maid has its magnetic influences, but the dear little chubby face of a tiny nigger boy with his pearly teeth and sparkling black eyes is simply irresistible. The whole picture is so pleasing to the eye that one wishes it would be a permanent one and not be spoilt later on by manly developments. Of course, like us all, the nigger has his failings, as the following little anecdote will show.

Many years ago, while lying at Barbados, a member of our ship's company was on shore painting the town red, and, having thoroughly enjoyed himself, knocked over a lamp and set fire to the house. The building was quite a small one of two rooms, and made of wood, so it was quickly burnt to the ground. Being in the immediate neighbourhood of several other similar little shanties there were no lack of witnesses to what transpired. The black lady owner of the burning pile was vehement in her abuse of our shipmate, who, finding the place too hot for him in more senses than one, took advantage of the first opportunity to make himself scarce.

Two days later the local police superintendent called on board to see our captain and presented a summons for the appearance of the midnight roysterer on a charge of arson; it being stated that he had deliberately knocked over the lamp with criminal intent. This was a very serious charge, and our gallant captain was very much disturbed that one of his men should have brought such discredit on his ship. He asked the superintendent if there was any lawyer into whose hands he could put the case on behalf of the prisoner, and was told that there

was a local firm who would be quite equal to the occasion.

A few hours later the lawyer came on board, and, after a consultation with the accused man, informed the captain that the case was a very serious one and if conviction was proved might mean a long term of imprisonment. The captain, very anxious to have the matter settled quietly, asked him if there was no way of arranging things amicably, and was told that such a thing was possible, but it would cost twenty-five pounds, as there were a great many witnesses for the prosecution.

As money was not of so much value to our good skipper as the honour of his ship, he readily handed over the necessary amount to the lawyer, and begged him to do his utmost to get his man off. When the trial took place, to everyone's amazement no one had ever seen or heard of the prisoner in their lives. It subsequently transpired that all the witnesses for the prosecution had been interviewed and promised ten shillings a head, with a fiver for the lady herself, if the sailor was proved not guilty.

The next day when the incident was being investigated at the police court, each of the witnesses swore that the prisoner was not the man who had set fire to the house, and even the lady herself declared that she had never set eyes on him before. The verdict was "Not guilty," and the prisoner left the court without a stain on his character.

As everybody appeared happy, one wondered why we could not settle these little affairs in the same amicable spirit in our own law courts. Of course there would be a danger of the prosecution employing similar tactics; but, on the other hand, methods which

might be considered quite honourable on behalf of the defence would certainly be condemned if used by the Crown. I have tried to think out how the idea would work in the Divorce Court, but the complications confused me and I had to give it up.

One of the most valuable gifts which any man or woman can possess is a lively sense of humour. A man who doesn't laugh is a curse to himself and his friends, and, equally, a man who laughs without cause is objectionable. A true appreciator of humour does not necessarily laugh at all, at least he laughs with his eyes more than his mouth. The nigger sees fun in everything, but somehow with him it seems so natural that it is beyond criticism.

I saw a nigger woman attempt to kill herself one day and having failed she tried to bust herself laughing. She not only nearly succeeded, but she had me reduced to an absolute wreck in about three seconds. I was sitting on the top of a tramcar, on the front seat, coming pretty fast down the hill behind Durban. Just in front of us was another car going the same way. Suddenly a black woman on top of the car in front seemed to realise that she had passed her destination, and seizing a huge bundle of washing lifted it over her shoulder and ran down the steps at the back of the car. The conductor was inside at the moment, and the platform was clear, so there was no check in her downward career. She literally flew down the staircase and jumped straight back in the wrong direction on to the road.

It was evident what she intended to do from the time she left the top of the tram and I sat aghast at the possibilities. The instant her feet touched the ground she fell on her back, turning a complete

somersault and skidding about ten yards. She finally brought up in the middle of the road, where she sat with her bundle still on her back and gave vent to one of the heartiest laughs I have ever heard. Soon after we passed her she picked herself up and went on her way rejoicing, absolutely none the worse for the escapade. The bundle of washing had saved her from instant destruction.

This reminds me of another incident in which the native sense of humour was not so strong. I was bicycling along a broad road when I saw a lady ahead of me carrying a bundle of washing on her head. As she was in the middle of the road, and I didn't wish to startle her with my bell, I tried to slip quietly by, but hearing my approach, before I reached her, she moved to one side. Unfortunately it was to the side on which I was passing. The result of this was that I got a nasty spill, my bike going in one direction while I went in another.

When I recovered myself I sat up on the road, and, looking back, saw the good lady about ten yards away, also sitting down, with the bundle still on top of her head. The situation seemed so comical that I couldn't help laughing; this made the woman so angry that she let forth a torrent of abuse which so frightened me that I was glad to get on my bike again and escape out of hearing. She had no sense of humour whatever!

Those who remember Barbados in the old days will recall to mind a certain notorious character called Jane Anne Smith, who was a never-ending source of amusement to all the naval officers who visited the port. Ostensibly a washerwoman, this good lady was an adept in the art of organising a "Dignity

Ball," at which, in her younger days, she had always been an attractive feature. She knew the Navy from A to Z, and always used to speak of her former gunroom friends, who had risen high in the service, with the greatest affection. She became rather portly in her mellow days, but still retained her strong sense of humour to the end.

My last recollection of her was when we had just weighed our anchor, and were beginning to move ahead with our engines, that we saw a boat pulling towards us with great vigour, in the stern of which sat a corpulent black lady. As our vessel began to gather way the poor old woman became very excited, and, standing up in the sternsheets of the shore-boat, shrieked out excitedly, "Stoppee ze ship, captain, stoppee ze ship, ze midshipman he no pay for ze wash." Our hard-hearted skipper turned a deaf ear to her entreaties and Jane Anne Smith knew us no more. It sounds rather brutal to go off without paying one's debts, but whenever the authorities knew about it the money was collected on board and sent from the next port.

Rather a terrible story came to my ears once, when I was at Bermuda, in which a coloured lady took a prominent part. It was a good long walk round from the Naval Dockyard to the town of Hamilton, and those who indulged in it usually stopped for lunch or refreshment *en route* at a wayside hotel. This hostel was kept by a very pious and respectable coloured lady. Indeed she was so ultra-good that one was suspicious of her past.

On board the flagship, which was lying near the dockyard, were three very steady-going unapproachably moral married officers. Amongst the younger

ones there flickered the usual spark of devilment which only required the fan of opportunity to start a blaze. It was discovered by some of these young bloods that the three married officers intended to walk out to the hotel and have tea on the following Sunday afternoon, and it was thought that this would be a splendid opportunity for some fun.

Accordingly it was arranged that three of them should go on ahead to the hotel and lunch there, so as to ensure that their three seniors had a thoroughly enjoyable time when they arrived for tea. The landlady was a terror for propriety and enforced it with great strength of language and powerful invective, so she was not the sort of person to be trifled with. When she was told at lunch-time of the use her house was to be put to in the afternoon for the purposes of assignation her fury knew no bounds. The whole details were explained to her of how three immoral rascals from one of the men-of-war were coming out at four o'clock to order tea, at which they would be joined later by three painted ladies of very questionable repute. The picture was coloured up to such an extent that the impassioned landlady simply thirsted for the blood of her victims.

Having sown their seed well the three perpetrators of the plot vanished into the unknown. Before leaving the hotel they had been very careful to describe every detail connected with the appearance of the expected male guests, so that the excited landlady recognised them immediately they appeared in the offing. She awaited their approach with every gun bearing on the enemy and the first broadside was fired immediately they came within range. Salvo followed salvo, and feeling themselves straddled with high explosive shells

busting all round them, these three poor innocent dears struck their colours and asked for an armistice. But it was useless, explanations in the face of such incontestible evidence were worse than useless. "You disreputable blackguards," she cried, "and coming here so innocent-like too. You think you will turn my respectable house into a den of harlots. I'll teach you to treat a moral woman like that. Don't come another step nearer. Get out of my sight. Begone, you immoral undertakers. May the good Lord punish you as you deserve."

Feeling that the situation had become quite unintelligible, and shocked at the torrent of abuse that had fallen on their innocent heads, the three tired pedestrians beat a hasty retreat and returned from whence they came feeling utterly bewildered. The only solution that suggested itself to them was that the woman was mad.

I have come across some rather amusing incidents in connection with Colonial life in different parts of the world, which tickled me very much at the time. Life was often very free and easy in some of these out-of-the-way places thirty or forty years ago, and things used to happen which caused no surprise locally, though they would astound visitors who came from over the seas.

At a certain remote little part of our great Empire there was a provincial legislature, which possessed twenty-five members, including Mr. Speaker. It so happened that, at the time of which I write, the "House" was equally divided—that is, there were twelve Government and twelve Opposition members, and of course the Speaker, who was nearly always a Government man, could give a casting vote. On

one occasion, the Leader of the Opposition proposed a vote of censure on the Government, and it behoved the latter to collect all its forces to defeat it. As the debate proceeded, it was found that one of the Government supporters was absent, and messengers were dispatched to find him, but without success. At last, in desperation, the whole of the local police force were requisitioned to search the town and bring the absentee to Parliament by force.

Meanwhile the anxiety of the Government increased as speaker after speaker was put up to delay the division as long as possible. At last word came through that the police had found their man in a public-house, very much the worse for wear, and were bringing him along. Eventually he appeared with his escort, who had to hold him up to register, and amidst scenes of great excitement the Speaker saved the Government with his casting vote.

An afternoon tennis party was being given at Government House and all the best-known people in the Colony were there. A small man-of-war lay in harbour and her captain was staying at Government House for a few days, but, having forgotten to take his tennis racket and shoes with him, had sent a message to his valet to bring them up during the afternoon.

It so happened that another man-of-war was expected and it was hoped that her officers would arrive in time for the party. As men were scarce, the ladies were eagerly looking forward to meeting the new arrivals, and many of them were with the Governor's wife in the drawing-room, which faced the drive, when a stranger was seen approaching with a tennis racket and a pair of shoes. The hostess immediately

jumped up and said, "Here is one of the new officers." A little flutter ran round the dovecot and inquisitive faces peeped from behind the curtains. "Oh! what a nice-looking man," said one. "A perfect darling," said another, and the local beauty said nothing, but quietly took a seat facing the door so that she would be the first person to be introduced.

The Governor's wife was too excited to wait for the bell to ring, so she went out into the hall herself to receive her visitor. The new-comer entered and made his bow, and was warmly welcomed by the hostess. He apparently tried to say something, but the poor lady, being very deaf, heard not a word and ushered him straight into the drawing-room, when the first person he met was the belle of the Colony, who rose as he entered. The visitor was at once introduced as the captain of the *Cockatoo*, and worthily fulfilled his part, although a trifle embarrassed. Just at that moment the Governor appeared. Recognising the captain's valet, whom he had often seen on board the little gunboat, and at once taking in the situation, he hurried the wretched man out of his dilemma, to the amazement of all the ladies. Later the Governor returned and explained the situation.

There were some cats who said that it served the local beauty jolly well right.

I was walking in the precincts of a colonial town once when I met the Governor trudging along towards Government House, carrying half a ten-pound salmon by a piece of string tied to its tail. We stopped to pass the time of day, and he told me that he had bought the whole fish from an Indian at the wharf-side for half a dollar, but, finding it rather heavy to carry, he stopped at the local fishmonger's on his

way through the town and sold him half of it for a dollar. I shook hands with him warmly, recognising him as a countryman of my own—which he was !

CHAPTER VIII

ON PADRES AND OTHERS

WHEN one has been travelling about the world for many years a certain number of anecdotes get mixed up in the brain, and it is difficult exactly to locate their origin. I will try to draw on my stock, and see what comes forth.

At a well-known Scottish seat, not a hundred miles from Edinburgh, there lived many years ago a perfectly charming old Scottish gentleman who was a strict teetotaller. He carried his principles so far that all his family and his servants were total abstainers also. No wine or spirits were ever drunk on the premises, so that anybody coming to dinner had to go dry. This was a severe task for some people, but the old gentleman was such a dear that no one resented it, and his house was very popular.

On one occasion a distinguished peer was dining, and his brougham came to take him home after the dinner. His host took him to the top of the steps at the front door where he wished his Lordship good night. Just as the noble earl's footman was closing the carriage door he said, "You will find the port under the seat, your Lordship."

The host heard this, and told me the story himself. This reminds me of another story. During the

Kiel celebrations of 1895, a party of British bluejackets were sitting in one of the gardens at Kiel drinking beer with some German sailors. Getting a sudden brain wave of patriotism, a German sailor suddenly arose and proposed the health of the Kaiser. This was drunk with great enthusiasm by all present.

When this toast was disposed of the senior British petty officer got up from his seat and proposed the Queen of Great Britain. Immediately there were signs of dissent, and the German sailors refused to drink Her Majesty's health. The petty officer who had proposed the toast then turned to his shipmates and said :

“ All right, boys, if they won't drink the health of our Queen, then up comes their blooming Emperor.”

With that he put his fingers down his throat and was immediately sick. The honour of Britain was thus vindicated.

Talking of royalties brings us to another story about one of the young princes. When he was a small boy his grandfather was very ill and he was allowed to go and see him for a few moments. As he came out of the room he said to the nurse, “ Where is the baby ? ”

He was surprised when the nurse gently pushed him out of the room and closed the door.

The next best thing to a king in Shanghai is a lord chief justice. I remember one who kept open house in the East for many years. In due course he died and was cremated. His family were restless people and moved about the world a good deal. They did not like to bury father, but preferred to carry him about in a silver box attached to a chain, which could be hung round the neck. One day after their return to England they were shopping in Regent Street when

there was a fearful to-do because they lost father.

"Oh, mother, what shall we do? We've left father on Liberty's counter."

Back they all went at once and found the dear old man quite happily reposing just where he had been left. But this gave them such a fearful shock, that poor father was never taken out for walks again.

I doubt that when father was being cremated he felt as hot as some of us did this summer [1921]. It was rather curious how divided up the country was in their prayers. The farmers wanted rain and the trippers wanted dry weather, so there must have been great confusion up "topside" when these conflicting prayers kept on rolling in.

A very distinguished naval captain, who, incidentally, had protected London from attack by sea during the whole of the Great War, was taking his vessel up the Medway, from Sheerness to Chatham, for her annual refit.

It was a cheerless sort of day, the kind that is common to those parts. There was a nasty mist and a driving rain was making navigation very difficult. The channel up the river is easy enough when all the landmarks can readily be seen, but, when the atmospheric conditions confine one's vision to a few hundred yards, the assistance of a pilot is absolutely essential.

On this occasion the gallant captain was taking his ship up himself, as no pilot was forthcoming, and the weather had put him into a very bad temper. It seemed to him so unnecessary for such huge quantities of fresh water to be falling on the river, where it was not required, while large tracts of land were being parched near by through the want of it.

From the Blackstakes up past Kethole Reach he

bore his troubles in silence, but as he rounded the Gillingham fort, just short of Chatham, he caught sight of a church and his suppressed feelings gave way. Shaking his fist at the church he angrily uttered these words: "I can see you all there, well-covered in your comfortable pews praying for rain, and I suppose your closed-in motors will come presently and take you home to your sofas and armchairs. Praying for rain are ye, and bedad, I'd like to pull you all out here and give you as much of it as I've had this morning, and bad scan to the lot o' ye."

It wasn't exactly a curse, because he is a Protestant ; but the Irish tinge of the last sentence showed that he wasn't altogether pleased with the efforts that were being made to save the crops.

It just shows.

Speaking of the Navy reminds me that a naval officer's wife had a maid who was keeping company with the captain's coxswain. One day there was an accident, and this man was cut in two by a steam-boat. The mistress hearing of the accident was endeavouring to break it gently to the maid when her efforts were frustrated by the latter breaking in with, "Oh, it don't matter to me, mum, I've gived him up," which also leads to another story.

A naval captain, of some distinction, was cruising about London one day, when he ran alongside a nice looking little craft whose taunt and spruce appearance attracted his attention. Sailing up under her lee quarter, he dipped his colours and, receiving a gracious reply, they bore along in company.

During the course of the afternoon, which they spent together, he took her to the theatre, where they sat in the stalls. At the end of the second act a note

was handed to the captain, which he opened and read as follows :—

DEAR CAPTAIN —,

When you have quite finished with my maid, my dress and my best hat, perhaps you will return them all to No. 127, Park Lane.

Yours truly.

The lady who had written the letter was the wife of his own admiral. And yet another :

When the fleet was lying at Invergordon during the summer of 1907, our Commander-in-Chief was on short leave and Admiral Bosanquet was temporarily the senior naval officer. This meant that all applications for leave of absence had to be approved by him.

One afternoon I was travelling by the train from Tain to Invergordon, when I noticed two of my officers get into the same carriage with Admiral Bosanquet. There were two other officers in the carriage, but none of them knew the admiral by sight, and all were in civilian clothes.

A conversation opened between the young people, and one of my officers was asked if he was going to take any leave, to which he replied in the negative. On being asked why, he said, "It isn't any use, because that awful old Bosey won't give anyone any leave."

When I was about to take my people off with me in my galley from the pier at Invergordon, one of them asked me who the old gentleman was who was just getting into the steamboat.

I replied, "That is Admiral Bosanquet, he came down with you in the train."

"O Lord!" said the boy, "we have got into a

mess," and then he told me what had happened.

I assured him that the admiral would be greatly amused and nothing more, but the two young officers were quite upset and refused to be comforted.

The admiral, who was a perfectly delightful old gentleman, was highly edified and told the story at dinner that night. He also told his flag-lieutenant to find out the names of the officers and ask them to dinner. Needless to say they both got their leave all right, which goes to prove that a "British sailor is a very fine fellow," as Sir Joseph Porter remarked to Captain Corcoran.

There is rather an amusing story told about an incident at Chatham when the new Admiralty House was opened, and Sir Gerard Noel took up his residence there. A ball was given at the naval barracks and, as the Commander-in-Chief was laid up at the time, Lady Noel went to it alone. On the evening of the dance she decided to walk across to the barracks from Admiralty House, as it was only a short distance, so wrapping her shoes up in a piece of brown paper and putting them under her arm she started off for the ball.

Now it happened that about this time people had been coming to the dances without invitations, consequently two young officers had been told off to scrutinise the guests on arrival and see if they had proper cards. As it had been raining Lady Noel had on a waterproof and was viewed with grave suspicion when she reached the vestibule. She was asked for her invitation card, but she said she was sorry she had left it at home.

As this confirmed their suspicions and as neither of them had yet seen the new Commander-in-Chief's

wife, she was taken into the inquisition chamber to be closely cross-examined.

"Would you kindly tell me your name," said one of the officers in a serious voice.

"Oh, I'm Lady Noel," was the quiet reply.

The two young men were flabbergasted and stood covered with confusion until one of them recovered himself sufficiently to murmur forth an abject apology.

"Oh, it's all right," said her Ladyship, "I've just walked over from Admiralty House," and she slipped quietly into the ladies' cloak-room.

There was a strong sense of humour about Lady Noel, and she was immensely amused at the incident, which she treated as a huge joke.

A friend of mine, who commands one of His Majesty's ships, had under him a young officer who was not quite all he thought he was. The first lieutenant dropped on him one day and told him what he thought of him, upon which the boy made a report to his captain.

Investigating the case on the quarter-deck the skipper heard what the young man had got to say, and learnt that he had been told by the first lieutenant that he was no earthly use whatever.

"Now, look here," said the captain, "when I was a youngster of your age I was very often called a bally fool and, as I knew I was one, I made no protest. When you are called one, you don't know that you are one, and you protest. *A fortiori*, you must be one." That ended the argument.

There are curious characters in all classes of society. We can't get away from the fact that a certain percentage of human beings do very strange things, which tends to prove that we do not all possess the same degree of sanity. I know a family where each member

thinks all the others are mad, and yet to an outsider they all seem sane enough. It would be indeed singular if the Navy was entirely free from these eccentricities.

As a matter of fact, however, there is probably a greater percentage of sound sanity in the British Navy than there is in any service or community in the world. The work does tell on some temperaments in time, as Yarmouth hospital fully shows, but it is open to question as to whether these weaker mentalities would not have given way under any conditions of life.

"The man is mad," is a phrase which most of us have used in reference to perfectly sane people. All it means is that some individual has had the courage to disregard fashion or custom, and act in an unorthodox manner. Very often this apparent madness is only a means to an end. A politician, for example, may behave in a perfectly extraordinary manner just because he wants to advertise himself and become well known. It is a cheap and easy method of getting into the limelight. Having achieved an even qualified success he can modify his actions and become quite a respectable member of the Government.

But in the Navy, where eccentricities sometimes exist, it is generally a kink which was born there, and was not detected at the time of entry. It is my painful experience that most of the cases I have come across have been connected with the Church. One of the first chaplains that I was shipmate with tied the iron cabin-scuttle to his legs and jumped overboard, sinking like a stone. What he did it for no one knew, for he was quite an ordinary sort of man.

One of my next experiences was with a double-barrelled man, that is one who combines the duties

of chaplain with those of naval instructor. The midshipmen led him a fearful dance, for he had no authority with them whatever. Nor were the lieutenants much better. There was a general mess on board, and one evening at dinner a rope with a large hook on it was lowered down through a skylight on the poop and hooked to the back of the parson's chair. Immediately some unseen hands pulled the chair up through the skylight, and the unfortunate chaplain sat on the deck quite unable to account for his misadventure.

Many minor jokes were played on him by the boys, and at last he could stand it no longer, and got himself into a shore appointment where, a few years later, I heard he was accidentally killed by a steam roller going right over him and flattening him into a pancake.

In one battleship, of which I was commander, we had a very extraordinary chaplain. When I first joined I noticed that the young lieutenants were always ragging him, and I protested, as it seemed to me undignified. However as time went on I saw that it was all very innocent, and was chiefly the padre's fault, as the following incident will show.

For the benefit of the paper fund, all the old newspapers and periodicals were sold once a quarter. Whenever this proceeding took place the paper caterer, announcing after dinner that the auction would then take place, called for a volunteer to sell the newspapers. There being no volunteer forthcoming, someone suggested that the padre should take the hammer. To this he objected, whereupon a loud clammer arose and many voices shouted, "The padre must sell the papers!" "Come on, padre; be a sportsman!" and so on.

Now the funny part of it was that this always happened every quarter. The parson refused to auction the papers at first, and after persuasion always consented, and with the same invariable result. How he never saw that he was having his leg pulled was extraordinary. The moment he got to his feet, there were loud cheers, of course, which lasted for several minutes; so that he was purposely prevented from getting on with the business. At last partial silence being restored, the reverend gentleman commenced. The bidding began normally; but it soon became evident that the young bloods of the mess were determined to have their fun, and by farthings and halfpence they ran the first paper up to many pounds.

In vain would the padre try to knock it down to someone, all disclaimed the bid, and so it mounted higher and higher until it reached hundreds of pounds. At last the disconcerted man gave up the unequal contest. Throwing his papers and the hammer down on the table he rushed from the mess amidst the howls of delight of the younger element.

Now this all seems very wrong, and I candidly confess that I did not like it, but it was purely the parson's fault as he had had similar experiences before. I only saw the performance once, as he left our ship before I had been there six months.

That he was a very peculiar man was instanced by one of my own experiences. I had been attending a forenoon's drill, and was seeing the decks cleared up afterwards, when I noticed that the padre was apparently following me about the quarter-deck. I was not in a particularly good temper and he seemed afraid to come near me, so I went up to him and said, "I see you want to speak to me, padre, what is the matter?"

"I have a very serious report to make," he said. "When I was in my cabin this forenoon someone came outside the door and called out 'Rats.' I have enquired," he continued in his ponderous tone, "and I have found out that when anyone calls out 'Rats' to someone else it means that that person is a drunkard. Now, I am a most abstemious man, and I have the strongest objection to being told I am a drunkard."

"My dear padre," I replied, "I never heard such nonsense. Whoever told you that? It isn't true."

"I am sure it is true," he said, "for my informant assured me that that was what was meant."

"Really, padre, I haven't time to discuss such rubbish. Take my advice and don't take any notice. It is only because you are so easily drawn that these things are done"—and after saying that I left him.

During the next few months all the parson's tormentors left the ship, and were appointed to a vessel in the Mediterranean. It was a great relief to the padre when they left us. But his peace was not to last long; for, as ill-luck would have it, he got appointed to the very same ship himself. He left us in sore distress, and I felt very sorry for him. What happened I never heard; but I saw that he left the service six months later; so I concluded that it had been too much for him.

These are a few of the worst examples I have met; but I have heard of many others almost as bad that I did not actually come across myself.

This happened many years ago, and a great change has come over the service since then, so it is in no way a reflection on the modern chaplain who, I believe, is a very different stamp of man to some of his predecessors. But there were many magnificent parsons in the old

days too. Where could you find a more perfect representative of the Anglican Church than the late Bishop Corfe, who was for many years a chaplain in the Navy? He was in my first ship, the *Audacious*, and we all loved him. I have served with others equally charming, but I hold that the authorities should have been more careful in their selections of naval chaplains, as men got into the service who did harm and should not have been there.

The thought of a sailor on horseback generally produces a smile on the face of a landsman, and I have often noticed that those most ready to laugh at the mariner's expense couldn't tell a cart-horse from a camel. As a matter of fact, the percentage of young naval officers who are very fond of riding, and ride quite well, compares very favourably with the percentage of ordinary civilians who have ever ridden at all.

I once saw a young naval lieutenant romp home with the Beeswing Cup in the Shanghai races, to the intense dismay of all the professional jockeys. Because he was a sailor, he started at 100 to 1. Midshipmen love riding and constantly get up paper-chases in different parts of the world. The cork woods near Gibraltar have seen many a hunt of this nature, and great fun they have been. I was returning from one of these outings late one afternoon many years ago with two other boys. We had walked our mounts back for some miles until we reached the beach which encircles the bay from Algeçiras to the Rock.

As it was getting dusk and we had to cross the neutral ground before gun-fire, we broke into a canter, which very quickly developed into a race. I was galloping along at a good pace, about twenty or thirty

yards ahead of my two messmates, when I suddenly saw a party of about a dozen men ahead of me apparently hauling on a rope. By the time I made them out clearly it was too late to pull up, and the next moment the rope of a seine caught the breast of my steed and my progress was stopped.

The fishermen, being all tied to the rope, were sent sprawling on the sand. Fortunately I kept my seat, for these bloodthirsty ruffians at once scrambled to their feet and dashed at me with long knives. It was an anxious moment, but just as the foremost Spaniard seized my bridle I dug in my spurs and my horse reared and threw him off. This made the others pause a moment, and seeing an opening I dashed off in the direction from which I had come. Meanwhile my two friends had come on the scene, and, taking advantage of the confusion, dashed through just as I went off in the opposite direction. Huge stones were hurled at them by the second contingent who had dropped the other rope and were coming along to join in the attack. One boy was nearly unhorsed by a severe blow from a stone on the back of the neck, while the other youngster's horse was very badly struck on the hind-quarters. After galloping back a couple of hundred yards I pulled up and found I was entirely cut off from my two shipmates. A sort of consultation appeared to be going on amongst the fishermen, and judging that my only chance was to ride through them as hard as I could before they had time to arrange a definite plan of action, I dug in my spurs, put my animal at full gallop, and lying flat on his withers went for the largest opening in the enemy's ranks which I could see. The moment they saw what I was up to the air was filled with Spanish oaths and they seized

every available missile they could lay their hands on and hurled them at me as I passed. The little cherub that sits up aloft was very wide-awake that night, for I reached my comrades untouched, and together we cantered back to the neutral ground, only too thankful to have escaped without serious damage.

CHAPTER IX

SCOTS WHA HAE !

WHEN I was a young man I had a hobby, and that was to be a Scotchman to my finger-tips. I even went so far as to have "a half yun" every time I crossed the Tweed, in honour of Scotland. If I could have ordered my own diet I am sure it would have consisted of porridge for breakfast, mealie puddins for lunch, with a good dinner off cockaleekie soup and haggis.

I loved Dean Ramsay, pictures of Highland cattle and a skirl on the bagpipes ; so all my artistic tendencies were Scotch, and a foursome reel was my greatest delight.

Since those days I have found out many things, and one of my discoveries has been that, while Scotchmen abroad are as a rule a splendid lot of fellows, those at home remain very, very narrow. I have heard it said that an Edinburgh man seems to think that the world begins at the Calton Hill and ends at the Haymarket Station. One would almost feel inclined to believe that that is true.

It is certainly a fact that the Scotchman is singularly successful in the East. If you go to any of the great cosmopolitan ports like Shanghai, Hong-Kong, Yokohama, Singapore, etc., and you ask who is the manager of a particular bank, insurance company, or shipping

firm, it is odds on that he is Scotch. I have tried to find out why this should be so, and the conclusion I have come to is that the average Scotchman is a determined character and means to get there if he can. He may go on most unholy busts, when he thinks occasion demands it ; but he does not allow these periodical lapses to interfere with his work. He looks ahead always, and avoids the pitfalls that entrap the unwary.

The average Englishman has less determination and is very unwise in his youth. He conforms too much to custom, and is far too sensitive about what his contemporaries think of him. He will allow himself to be drawn into bad habits by his companions and many go under from that alone.

You may think a Scotchman is a consistent hard drinker because whenever you see him he seems the worse for wear, but the chances are that he takes jolly good care of himself in between whiles, and only appears in a frivolous mood when he has time to spare for it. There are exceptions, of course, and when they exist they are generally bad ones and usually knock the poor devil right out. It is these exceptions which impress themselves on the public mind and very wrongfully give the idea that the Scotch are a race of hard drinkers.

Scotchmen help each other naturally. If a Scotchman has to choose between two men of nearly the same calibre, the one being an Englishman while the other hails from across the Tweed, it is very long odds on that he will choose his own countryman.

Scotchmen are very much more openly patriotic abroad than they are at home, which is perhaps natural. It is therefore much more enjoyable to join a gathering of them in foreign lands than to sit down

amongst a stuffy lot of people in Scotland whose outlook is confined to such narrow limits as the boundaries which their country affords.

I have often had some great nights with my countrymen in different parts of the world ; but the one most prominent in my memory was on the 30th of November, 1892, when the ship that I belonged to visited Shanghai. We were lying at the buoy off the Custom House, where the river was just a quarter of a mile in width ; so access to the town was very easy by means of the local sampan.

I had received an invitation to dine with a Scotch family and to go to the St. Andrew's Ball with them afterwards, which was the great event of the year in those parts. Being somewhat of a piper and having been invited to play my bagpipes at the dance, I donned my kilt, and taking my pipes with me duly presented myself at my host's house in time for dinner. Before going into the drawing-room I carefully placed the treasured instrument in what I thought was a safe place where no one would touch it. It had been very carefully tuned and was quite ready for action when the time came, so I sailed in to make my bows with the confidence of a monarch.

I found a large gathering of Scotchmen, and several charming ladies ; so the dinner was a great success, and in due course the ladies left the room while the men hoisted " blue-pendant-eight-flag," which means in naval parlance to turn together to port, which we found very comforting.

At nine o'clock our host suggested that we ought to make a move in the direction of the ball, so we all collected in the hall and put on our coats and hats. I found my bagpipes precisely where I had left them,

and I innocently believed that they had not been touched.

During the early part of the evening the dances consisted of waltzes, polkas and lancers, all the Scotch music being reserved till after supper.

At midnight a procession was formed up with three pipers at its head to march into the supper-room. When all was ready we started to blow up our pipes, but for the life of me I couldn't fill my bag. It was an awkward moment, for everyone was wondering what was the matter ; but although I nearly blew myself inside out and turned scarlet over my exertions, I could not make the smallest impression on the bag.

My brother pipers too couldn't understand why I didn't tune up. It was just awful. At last I gave it up and told the others to go on without me, and I put my pipes under my arm and marched off to some secluded spot where I could find out what was the cause of my misery.

I remembered that after the ladies had left the dining-room there had been a lot of noise in the hall, and at first I thought I had heard a sound as if some novice was trying to blow up the pipes. As everyone was talking, I couldn't hear distinctly, and dismissed the idea from my mind. I didn't believe it possible that anyone would play me such a dirty trick.

However, the thought coming to my mind again, got fixed there, and I examined the chanter and all the drones carefully, with the result that I found that the big drone reed was missing. Someone had removed it.

Now you may say what you like to a piper, you may tread on his tenderest corn or you may even borrow

his best girl, and he won't get ruffled ; but there is one thing which cannot be tolerated, and that is to remove his big drone reed. There are very few cases known in history of anyone daring to commit such a heinous crime.

Realising on reflection that this was the work of one of the ladies with whom I had dined, I began to see red. If ever I was near murder in my life, I was on the verge of it then. The only restraining influence was the fact that I had no idea who the villain of the play was.

There had been several ladies at the dinner and I was very loath to murder them all.

I was ruminating on this point when one of the other pipers came on the scene and asked me what had been the matter. Amid the furies of my angry mind I explained to him in powerful language what had happened and how I thirsted for immediate revenge.

But as it was not his funeral he took a much milder view of the situation than I did. He suggested that a little champagne would be a good antidote and whispered in my ear that he had another big reed, so I would be all right for the reel. I quite saw his point that I didn't in the least know who had done the foul deed ; so, after having quite exhausted my stock of compliments on the head of the unknown one, I followed him to the refreshment room, where the popping of bubbly corks restored my equanimity, and we sat down to a high-class supper.

The reel afterwards was a great success ; the ladies all wore tartan sashes and the men were in kilts. I have never seen such animation out of Scotland. When we absolutely couldn't play another note, and

the dancers were all half dead, the reel came automatically to an end, and we went and had our second supper. It was then about two o'clock, and I had entirely forgotten the unfortunate incident earlier in the evening.

For another hour the merry dance continued, and then we had the reel of Tulloch, which put new life into us all and prepared the way for our third supper, which was as great a success as our other two had been.

During this repast it was evident that some of the more convivial spirits intended to make a night of it. The champagne was still flowing like water and the company was getting noisy. This had the effect of making the ball-room less crowded, for many of the less hilarious guests slipped out quietly and ga'ed awa' hame.

By four o'clock most of the dancing had ceased, and the last ditchers drifted back to the supper-room for their final jamboree. An impromptu Scotch concert was soon begun by some "keelie wattercock" singing "We're nae that foo, we're nae that foo, we've just a wee drop in oor e'e." A vociferous encore produced "The rigs o' barley," and then we got fairly set and song followed song in great rapidity. There was no accompaniment, but that was rather a blessing as it might have limited the repertoire. One of our pipers created a furore of applause by his rendering of "Jimmy's joined the volunteers," and when he followed this with "The wind blew the bonnie lass's plaidie awa'," he fairly brought the house down. The audience was in fine humour by this time and the choruses were a huge success.

Perhaps the song of the evening was—

"My name it is Donald Macdonald,
 I come frae the hielan's sae grand;
 I follow the colours and will do
 Wherever my chieftan has land.
 Wherever a clan is disloyal,
 Wherever my chief has foe,
 He may send for Donald Macdonald
 Wi' his hielan' men all in a row."

Chorus :

"Wi' his kilt an' sporran an' a',
 Wi' his bonnet an' brogues an' a',
 He may send for Donald Macdonald
 Wi' his hielan' men all in a row.
 Then here's to Donald Macdonald,
 Here's to Donald Macdhu,
 And we'll drink to Donald Macdonald
 Till we all get roarin' foo."

It is an inspiring ditty and its popularity is greatly enhanced by the toast of Donald Macdonald being drunk after each verse. He is first toasted as Mr. Macdonald and gets promotion on each occasion until he finally becomes Lord Macdonald amidst the wildest excitement.

By half-past five several of the enthusiasts were slumbering peacefully on the floor, so the brave and gallant remainder brought the proceedings to a close by singing "Auld Lang Syne."

But this was not the end.

Someone suggested that we should march along the Bund headed by the pipes. And the proposal having met with warm approval, our three pipers formed up, and away about twenty of us went, to the tune of "The barren rocks of Aden."

Half-way along the Bund a halt was made at the Chartered Mercantile Bank, where, in broad daylight, we drank more champagne to the dear old country we all loved so much. This was the cause of a few

casualties, and it was a mere handful of the gallant six hundred who finally accompanied me to the Custom House pier, where, after many heart-breaking farewells, I went off to my ship.

It was then seven o'clock and, as my vessel sailed at eight, I just went down to my cabin and had a bath.

After we had slipped from the buoy and were steaming down the river, the admiral (Sir Edmund Freemantle) came up to me and said, " When did you come off, young man ? " I told him that I got on board at seven, and he went off chuckling.

I always found Sir Edmund a most charming admiral, and I owe him a great deal, for he got me out of a scrape once, for which I was very grateful. His flag-lieutenant, Teddie Ogilvie, and his secretary, Paul, were both very dear friends of mine and helped to make my life in China, as a lieutenant, a very happy one.

CHAPTER X

BOAT-RACING YARNS

SHIPS' boats in the Royal Navy are not built for speed: they are built for service. The word "service" is a comprehensive term, which, in this sense, seems to mean that the boats will stand a lot of knocking about. Nor are they particularly good for any special kind of work. The Americans are far ahead of us in this respect, and have some splendid boats. Up to quite recent years all our larger boats have carried popguns in their bows, as if the whole Navy was obsessed with the desire to go up African rivers and slaughter defenceless niggers. Just as, for years after the introduction of ironclads and early battleships, boarding pikes were still part of a ship's weapons. But this is a digression.

On foreign stations nearly every American man-of-war had a boat which she reserved for racing, and a jolly good thing was usually made out of it. Most sailors bet heavily on their boat races, and the Americans are by far the greatest of these nautical gamblers. They nearly always win their races, and large bags of dollars are taken from the defeated ship's company. It is curious with what confidence our men back their own boat. The officers are usually more careful, and only indulge in speculation when there is a fair chance of their winning.

You don't often catch an American napping, but I remember a case when the U.S. wasn't quite wide enough awake, and the Union Jack romped home an easy winner. We were lying in one of the Japanese harbours, not far from an American man-of-war, when, one evening, a smart-looking crew, of four men and a coxswain, came pulling round our ship, and, lying on their oars under our bows, hailed the men on our forecastle and asked them if they wanted a race. They called their boat a dinghy, and asked if we had one to match them. Their boat was a gig pure and simple, so our racing coxswain accepted the challenge and the Yankee boat was called alongside to settle the conditions. No questions were asked about our boat, and the race was arranged for a certain date and time, the distance to be three miles and the stakes five hundred dollars.

Now it happened that we had a mighty smart four-oared whaler, which had as much right to be called a dinghy as their gig. This boat had won many races and we had a well-trained crew to pull her. The Americans saw her practising, but were so confident in their own dinghy that they raised no objection, and sent on board to ask us if we cared to raise any more money. By this time our officers and men felt pretty sure that we had the Yanks "on the ground hop," so every penny we could raise was put on our boat.

The race created the wildest excitement, the course being laid to end between our two ships. Our men took a slight lead at the start, and, keeping a steady stroke till within half a mile of the finish, came right away in the final spurt and won by six lengths. It was a glorious victory, which our

ship's company cheered to the echo, and the three thousand dollars, which came across to us from the American ship that night, sent most of us to bed very happy.

But in these international races so much depends on the boat that our men don't get much of a chance. The only really fast boat I have ever seen, belonging to one of our ships, was an eight-oared galley, which belonged to the Commodore at Hong-Kong. With its full crew on board it sat on the water like a seagull and travelled off its oars like a university eight. It was never beaten. The crew were Chinese and pulled magnificently.

There are, of course, different styles of pulling. The British as a rule pull a steady stroke, with the slightest of pauses at the end of it, keeping their bodies fairly upright as they swing with the pull and recovery. Some years ago a curious style was introduced by our men in the Mediterranean Fleet, in which the whole crew disappeared out of sight below the boat's gunnel at the end of each stroke. It looked too foreign to please me, but I must confess it was singularly successful in making a boat move.

Perhaps the most exciting day of the year in any fleet is when the Annual Regatta is held. Formerly great preparations were made for this festival, and, for several days beforehand, the time was given over to those who were taking part in the races.

The pulling races took place on the first day, ending up with the "all-comers' race" as the last item. The Service sailing races were on the following day, while the Admiral's Cup was sailed for on the third day. In this latter race, as in "the all-comers' pulling race," free licence was the rule. Any rig for the

sailing race, and any number of oars for the all-comers'.

The latter race was the most exciting of the day. As a rule each ship entered every one of her boats for it. Most of these were double banked and carried as many extra oars as could be got into them. Sometimes they carried paddles as well. The largest ship's boat, pulling twenty-two or more oars, all treble banked, usually carried the band, as well as the nigger party with their faces blackened. The hulla-baloo, which began at the start and lasted long after the race finished, reminded one of a race of Indian war canoes, where each person taking part in the race uttered the most unearthly yells and seemed demented.

Curiously enough, these huge 42-foot launches, packed with nearly a hundred men apiece, occasionally won this race. It is wonderful what a speed they could get up if the crew trained seriously for the event. In the good old days when the first and second divisions of a fleet were always alluded to as the weather line and the lee line respectively, there used to be a good deal of rivalry between them. The lee line ships would always support one of their own number in preference to one of the weather line, and vice versa.

After all, sailors are very child-like in their fancies. Take an admiral for example ; he cannot suppress his preference for the ship he is living on board. The Japanese get over this by constantly shifting the admiral's flag about. An admiral commands the fleet, not a single ship, and he should treat all his vessels alike.

Some years ago, a military officer, just returned from Malta, asked me if it was true that the officers



of the Mediterranean flagship bore the same comparison to the rest of the Navy as Guards' officers did to the Army. My answer is unprintable.

Boat races have an important effect on the relations between two ships' companies. I have known an enmity spring up between two ships, that developed into the strongest hatred, simply because one had a boat that the other couldn't defeat. It ran through the officers' messes as well as the men's and lasted for two years. During that period it wasn't safe to allow liberty men from those two ships to land on the same day. On the other hand, powerful friendships arose through one ship showing a strong sympathy for another in a boat race. Of recent years one has not seen so much of this, but formerly, when a foul round the mark boat led to a free use of stretchers, the expression of warm feeling was not uncommon.

I remember some years ago, when an important boat race took place, and a small ship's boat defeated a boat belonging to the flagship, the captain of the ship owning the winner was hissed by the ship's company of the flagship when he boarded the admiral's vessel after the race. What struck me as most extraordinary was that the officers of the flagship took no steps to stop it. The conclusion drawn was that they were in sympathy with their own men.

A protest was entered by the flagship's boat's crew ; but it appeared so monstrously unfair to the winners that they requested that the matter should be settled by an impartial committee of three officers from the other ships.

The result was that the protest was not allowed, but it was several months before the ill-feeling between the two ships eventually died down.

Of late years, both officers and men have had so many more serious matters to think about, that, by comparison, boat-race disputes have seemed too trivial to worry over, and perhaps it is just as well.

In the sailing races there were often accidents, especially in squally weather on the Admiral's Cup day when any rig was allowed. Canvas was often crowded on the boats and jibing round the mark boat frequently led to a capsize. There were few of us who hadn't been in the water more than once, either through our own misfortunes or in trying to help others in theirs.

On one occasion I was racing for the Admiral's Cup at Hakodate and was leading the others when I saw a boat capsize about a quarter of a mile dead to leeward of me. There was a nasty sea on at the time with a fresh gale blowing, and, of course, we at once gave up the race and went to the rescue.

As we neared the men in the water I lowered my sails, as I thought in good time, but, the wind being behind us, we rather overshot the mark, and it was touch and go, as one of the men in the water was evidently drowning.

Telling my men to throw some oars overboard I seized the end of the mainsheet and jumped into the water as we passed within about five yards of the struggling sailor. One of my men followed me, and we got hold of the fellow and kept him up with the help of the oars, but it was no easy matter in the rough water.

I had kept hold of the end of the mainsheet, but it was running out to a clinch as the boat drifted away, so I yelled to the crew of my boat to haul us in; but nothing happened. It may have been only

a few moments, but it seemed hours to me and my language became awful.

I knew that we would all be drowned if the boat drifted off without us, for I was nearly done already, so my feelings can well be imagined. However, the men in my boat at last seemed to realise the danger we were all in and hauled us on board. The race was resailed the next day, but I only managed to come in second, which was hard luck.

On another occasion I was sailing a launch with a big private rig of my own, made at Cowes, and we had great hopes of winning. We had a huge mainsail, far too big for the boat, and all the other sails in proportion.

As we were rounding the first mark boat my weather shroud carried away, and the whole show went by the board. Fortunately the launch didn't capsize, but it was a sadly disappointed crew that were towed back to their ship.

There is excellent boat racing at Bermuda. The Bermudans are very keen and have some excellent little yachts which are very fast. The mainsail of one of these craft is hooped to the mast (which has no shrouds) all the way up, and is a triangular sail with the mainsail and topsail all in one. The build of the boat is peculiar, too, and with a strong breeze is not always safe. I remember one boat actually sailing to the bottom. She didn't capsize, but just went down bows first.

At Singapore once I saw a steamboat win the sailing race. She had her screw taken off with the aperture filled up and her boiler hoisted out. Two masts were stepped and she sailed beautifully under two lug sails. She was a 28-foot steam cutter and

stood up to the wind well. I was racing against her, but fouled her at the last mark boat and got disqualified, so she got the race although I came in first. That was not the only time I was disqualified.

Once in 1884, when the fleet was at Terra Nova, I was sailing one of the *Agincourt's* cutters in a "service-rig" race. It was notorious that our boats did not carry their full allowance of sail; so I had a new head put on to my mainsail, increasing the sail area by about ten square feet.

After I had won, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was our admiral, sent for me on board the flagship and presented me with a beautiful pair of field glasses. But alas! the second boat protested on the score that I had altered the sails for the regatta and I was disqualified. I had to return the prize to H.R.H. and felt very sad about it, but I felt afterwards that the judgment had been a fair one.

In far Vancouver Island they used to have a capital regatta up an arm of the sea, above Victoria, at a place called the Gorge. There were all sorts of races, but the *pièce de résistance* was the race of the Indians in war canoes.

The crews were dressed in head feathers and war paint, and the noise they made as they paddled was terrific. It was great fun when they collided, as they often did. A perfect pandemonium took place then. The canoes were very large and held from twenty to thirty braves each with the chiefs steering, with paddles also, in the sterns. The speed was very fast and the whole performance was most exciting and picturesque.

At one of the old regattas in the Navy a special feature was introduced of a tug-of-war. It was got

up by the boats of the weather line against those of the lee, but the admirals wouldn't have any more of it, as half the boats had their sterns pulled off.

The two largest boats had a hawser between them and were stern to stern. Ahead of each of these was another boat which took the painter of the boat behind her, the size of each boat diminishing as she got further away from the centre until the ends came, when a big boat took the end painter so as to keep the line straight. All the boats were heavily weighted, and their oars were double banked.

Bands were, of course, in the bigger boats and when the pistol fired there was enough noise to awaken the dead. The tussle lasted until far into the night, when half the boats were beginning to sink.

In the days of masts and yards there were very often races between the ships under sail. One of the smaller ships of the squadron would be hove-to about ten miles dead to windward and then the remainder would race round her. It used to be great fun. Though the lines of a ship had a good deal to do with the speed, a very great deal depended on the seamanship of her captain. Far more than some people thought. I am sure that Jerry Noel, the finest sailor I ever knew, was just as valuable in a sailing race as Steve Donoghue is to-day on the back of a thoroughbred.

CHAPTER XI

THE VICTORIA AND THE CAMPERDOWN

H.M.S. *Hood* (the immediate predecessor of the present vessel of that name) hoisted the pendant for the first time on the 1st of June, 1893, at Chatham, and sailed from England a few weeks later to join the flag of Sir George Tryon, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean. She was commanded by Captain Edmund F. Jeffreys, a very distinguished and capable torpedo specialist, who soon proved himself to be a modern seaman of the highest order. His quick grasp of a situation was wonderful, and all who served under him were deeply impressed by his prompt initiative and resource.

As the *Hood* was a show ship, we had many distinguished visitors on board while at Chatham, among whom were H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, and Sir Harry Keppel, the famous Admiral of the Fleet. The daughter of this wonderful old man had married our commander, so he had a personal interest in the *Hood*. He was getting on for eighty in those days, but was still very active, and showed a great interest in the ship.

Persona grata at Court, Sir Harry was one of the great naval characters of the latter half of the nineteenth century. It was he who, when his ship was

making for Macao in a leaking condition, had saluted the Portuguese flag when the main deck guns were level with the water, and just before the vessel sank. It was he who had knocked the French Ambassador (M. Waddington) through the window at Cowes, because he made a disparaging remark about the British Navy. Fortunately the Prince of Wales smoothed matters over, and nothing was known of the episode to any beyond a small circle of friends. I heard of it through the Duke of Edinburgh when he commanded the Channel Fleet.

As an example of how imaginary episodes get noised abroad, the following is instructive :—

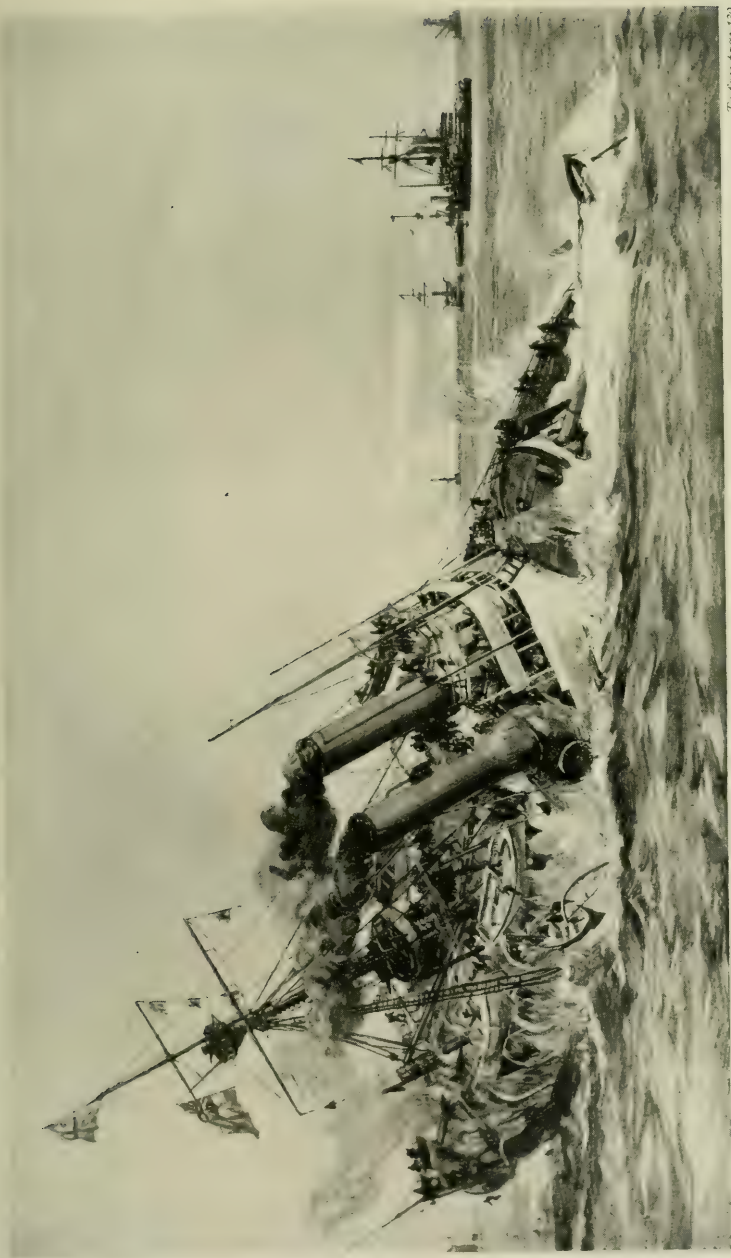
When I was in the *Hood*, during the first few days of our commission, a famous actress of the day, Miss Letty Lind, lunched with me and was taken round the ship. It was quite a simple little lunch with only one other person (one of our lieutenants) present. Some years later, on a foreign station, I met a captain who said to me, "I always connect you in my mind with King Edward, when he was Prince of Wales."

"Good heavens," I replied, "I have never in my life spoken to him."

"What about that time when Letty Lind was lunching with you on board the *Hood* and H.R.H. was lunching with your captain, and when he heard that Miss Lind was in the wardroom at once left the captain's table and joined you?"

"Well," I answered, "there isn't a word of truth in it. H.R.H. and Miss Lind were never on board the *Hood* on the same day." I never heard who the inventive genius was, but it certainly made a fine yarn.

About this time there were some very well-known



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SINKING OF H.M.S. VICTORIA.

officers on the Mediterranean station. The second in command was Sir Albert Markham, celebrated as an arctic explorer, while the senior captain was Noel, afterwards Sir Gerard Noel, Commander-in-Chief of the Nore. These two men figured prominently in the court-martial which was held at Malta in July, 1893, to investigate the circumstances connected with the collision which led to the sinking of the *Victoria* off the Levant coast a few weeks previously.

The news of the loss of Sir George Tryon's flagship reached the *Hood* on her arrival at Gibraltar, and created consternation throughout the ship. It was inconceivable, from the telegraphic reports, how such a disaster could possibly have happened under circumstances which were so favourable for fleet manœuvres. Criticisms were withheld, because it was felt that explanations would surely come with the fuller newspaper reports. Owing to the loss of one of the fleet, the *Hood* was immediately ordered to proceed to Malta to complete the proper number, and so our stay at the Rock lasted only a few hours.

The second in command of the *Hood* was Commander Freddie Hamilton, who was Second Sea Lord of the Admiralty at the outbreak of the Great War. He was a charming man and very popular throughout the ship. Amongst the other officers, who were all good fellows, there were none who came prominently forward afterwards, but several of them served and did excellent work during the late campaign. Soon after the *Hood* arrived at Malta the *Camperdown* returned from the Levant. I saw her steam into the harbour with the collision mat over the bows, and her nose deep in the water, while her band played lively airs on the quarter-deck. I remember feeling that on such a pathetic

occasion it would have shown better taste if there had been less demonstration. As far as we could judge at the moment, the *Camperdown* had to some extent been responsible for the deaths of a very great number of officers and men, including the unfortunate Commander-in-Chief, and it would have been wiser to have entered the harbour in silence.

After the *Camperdown's* arrival, stories soon floated around, but nothing could clearly explain why Sir George Tryon made such a blunder as to attempt to turn his two columns sixteen points inwards when he hadn't room enough between his columns to carry out the manœuvre. What would be thought of a colonel whose companies were at quarter column distance, and he tried to wheel them into line without opening them? The story of the accident is too well known to give details of here, suffice it to say that the fleet was in two columns, one of which was led by the *Victoria* and the other by the *Camperdown*, when the signal was made to turn sixteen points inwards leaders together, remainder in succession. The distance that the columns were apart was less than the sum of the diameters of the turning circles of the two flagships, consequently the manœuvre was impossible.

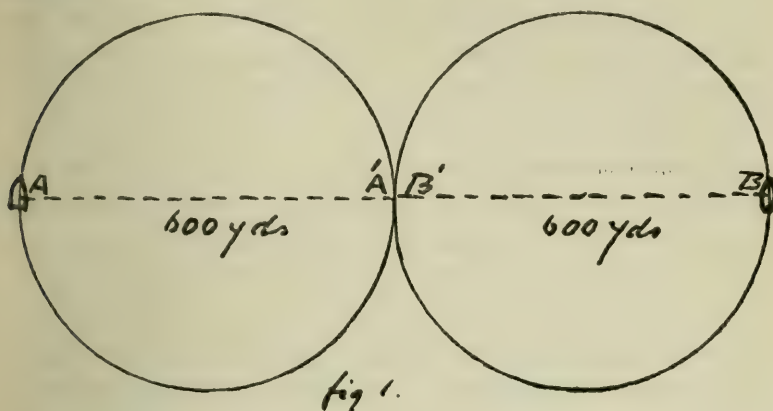
To explain the evolution, and the danger if the ships are not far enough from each other at the start of the manœuvre :

A and B have the same sized turning circles, each being 600 yards in diameter.

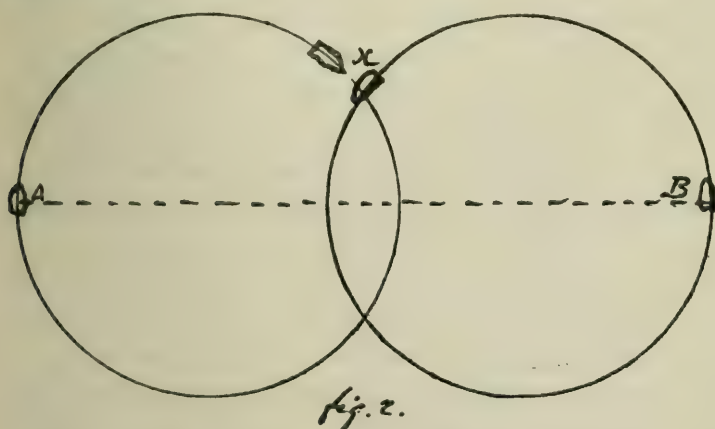
They are steaming on the same course and are 1,200 yards apart. [Fig. 1.]

It must be quite obvious that A and B will rub sides at 'AB' if they turn inwards so as to alter course 180 degrees.

Therefore the distance between A and B must be greater than the sum of the diameters of the turning circles.



The *Victoria* and *Camperdown* were less than the sum of the diameters of their turning circles apart, consequently they met at X, where the circles cut. [Fig. 2.]



There was one very prominent fact at the time, and that was that the loyalty of the fleet generally for their late Commander-in-Chief was wonderful. Every-

one tried to excuse him in one way or another. All seemed to have had such confidence in their admiral's ability, that they believed he had some plan which somehow or other had not been carried out. I never heard a soul blame him. One could not but admire this spirit; it was the spirit of the old Navy.

I doubt if there is anyone who has not at some moment of his career made a mental calculation which was wrong. Not in such a glaring case as this perhaps, but still it shows that the mentality of even our cleverest men is not always absolutely stable. It is easy enough to sit down and think a thing out correctly, but it seems possible for great minds to suffer from instances of temporary aberration when acting suddenly without calculation. I say "possible," because this was evidently an instance. Tryon was an obstinate man and unlikely to take correction kindly, so one cannot reasonably criticise any of his officers; but there were others in the fleet who should have saved the situation and didn't. Men who felt certain that there would be an accident and went blindly into it.

The ship next astern of the flagship was, I believe, the *Nile*, commanded by Captain Gerard Noel. He foresaw the trouble the moment the signal was reported to him, but he was not in a position to do more than act very warily as he followed the admiral round as he turned. The moment he saw what was happening he just kept clear of the mix-up. It always takes two ships to have a collision. Only one may be primarily responsible for the accident, but if the other, seeing the danger, could have avoided it, she cannot escape blame.

Some mercantile captains are quite willing to accept collision, provided they are certain the other fellow is

wrong, others just plod along according to rule, but the spirit of the law is that if you *can* avoid a collision you must do so, whether the other fellow is wrong or not. This requires very sound judgment, because if you don't follow the strict rule of the road, you will get all the blame if there is a collision; but there are times when a collision is inevitable, if one ship sticks too closely to the rule, and when prompt action would have saved the situation. The *Victoria* was primarily wrong in hoisting an impossible signal, but what of the *Camperdown*? Could she have avoided the collision?

There have been many arguments on this point. It has been said that the rear-admiral was obliged to obey the Commander-in-Chief's signal, or it would have been a case of disobedience of orders. But that is all nonsense. To begin with, no officer in command is permitted to jeopardise the safety of his own ship under any circumstances whatever, and it is clearly laid down that the answering pendant is not to be hoisted close up until the signal is thoroughly understood. It is very clear that the rear-admiral did not understand the signal, and therefore he had no earthly excuse for mast-heading his answering pendant. He showed hesitation by keeping the pendant at the dip for several minutes, and was asked by semaphore what was the matter. To this he made no reply, but gave orders to hoist it close up, and went blindly into the danger zone as soon as the flagship hauled down the signal.

Some said that they expected the first division would circle round the second division, but that was based on the weak supposition that the Commander-in-Chief would do the unexpected as they said he had

often done before. That Sir George Tryon was a very able flag-officer no one has ever disputed. There is perhaps something in the fact that his officers trusted him so implicitly that they were nearly all ready to follow him regardless of the fatal consequences staring them in the face. There was one captain though who was too strong a man to follow that policy. If he had been in the leading ship of the second division, he would never have allowed his Commander-in-Chief to carry out the fatal manœuvre, which led to the loss of so many valuable lives and such a fine battleship. That man was the captain of the *Nile*.

For many years the loss of the *Victoria* was a subject for argument in naval messes, but it is doubtful if any really convincing explanation was ever forthcoming as to what was in Sir George Tryon's mind when he gave the order to hoist his unfortunate signal. It is said that just before the final plunge of his great ship, he said that it was all his fault. If that is so, he knew he had made a mistake, and the extraordinary part of it was that it was a mistake which one would not have expected a midshipman to make.

There were many young officers on board the *Victoria* who distinguished themselves later in life. Prominent amongst these was Commander John Rushworth Jellicoe, now Lord Jellicoe, who was in bed with Malta fever at the time of the accident, and was not picked up until some time after the *Victoria* had sunk. As a matter of fact he was very nearly drowned, being in a very weak state when one of his midshipmen came to his rescue. It is said that the immersion completely cured Commander Jellicoe's fever, but I don't know whether that is true or not.

The new Commander-in-Chief was Sir Michael Culme

Seymour, who hoisted his flag in the *Ramillies*. He had previously commanded the Channel Fleet, and was one of our most valued flag-officers of the time. He had a very gruff, loud voice, but his hale and hearty manner won him many friends, and he was quite popular. Sir Michael was a tall, handsome man, whom one could not help admiring, and he was guilty of many very kind actions.

The *Hood* remained on the station for three years under Captain Jeffreys, and was a very happy ship. Her gallant skipper was a great sportsman and kept quite a number of dogs on board, with a native kennelman to look after them. He picked the lot up somewhere on the Greek coast, because he thought it not fair on our own sporting dogs to give them the rotten life that these poor brutes had to lead.

I never saw such a collection of scallywags as these animals were. One brute called Christopher Columbus was the limit. Once when I was out shooting with the skipper, I shot a woodcock. Knowing the ruffian's proclivities, I ran to pick the bird up the moment it dropped, but Christopher outsped me and before I had time to stop him he had swallowed the woodcock, feathers and all. I cursed the brute and complained to his master; but all the satisfaction I got was an unmistakable hint from the skipper that he didn't believe that I had hit the bird at all, which was adding insult to injury.

Unfortunately I got a very bad dose of Malta fever before I had been in the *Hood* a year and I was sent to hospital. At this particular period Malta fever was very prevalent on the station, and no one seemed to know what it came from. There were thirty-five officers in the naval hospital when I went there, all of

whom were in different stages of this disease. I felt that local influences were at work, and that I would never get well as long as I remained at Malta, so I asked to be allowed to go home at my own expense. The Commander-in-Chief came to see me and in his gruff way said, "What's this I hear about your wanting to go home?" "Well, sir," I replied, "I feel that I shall die if I remain here."

After further conversation Sir Michael said he would wire home and ask the Admiralty if I could have three months' leave. A few days later I was carried on board the *Clan Mackintosh*, and sailed for England, with a minimum temperature of 103°. I never left my bunk all the way to Tilbury Docks and had to be literally carried to my home in Scotland; but once there a rapid change for the better took place, and in two months I was able to go to London and appear before a Medical Board for survey. This, however, was not a success, as the first thing I was asked to do was to hold my hands above my head. As I couldn't do this I was sent home again and told to return for a further survey when I had quite recovered. Meanwhile my successor was appointed to the *Hood* and I was placed on half pay.

A short description of this fever might be interesting. It began in the usual way with headache, nausea and a high temperature. If the temperature remained high the patient got into a very weak state and only a strong constitution would pull him through; but it took months, unless he left Malta. It generally ended in acute rheumatism, which not only was very painful, but took a long time to get rid of. There were many cases of patients who had gone to hospital at Malta with wounds or sprains, and had developed fever there and died of it.

The doctors had been very puzzled by this disease, and it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that they found out that the trouble was due to goats' milk. It was then seen that for years the unfortunate sufferers had been fed on the fever germs from the moment they went to hospital. Since the use of goats' milk has been prohibited amongst the naval and military community very few cases of Malta fever have appeared, but it seems a great pity that so many valuable lives were lost before the cause was found out.

CHAPTER XII

QUAINT OLD SEA-DOGS

SIR JAMES HOPE was a very distinguished old admiral, who was wounded at the attack on the Taku Forts in China in the early sixties. Just before I joined the service he was the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, and I remember staying at Admiralty House for a few days about the time that he broke his leg on board the old *Devastation*.

He was showing a party of ladies round the ship before she was quite finished, and fell down in the semi-darkness and fractured his thigh. He was very brave about it, and lay quite still until the ladies had been led away by another officer before disclosing the nature of his injuries.

He was a cousin of mine, and had given me my first riding lessons when I had stayed at Carriden House, his home in Scotland, near Linlithgow, so I knew him pretty well.

At home he was a charming old gentleman; but I always heard that he was a very strict disciplinarian on board ship.

Being a bachelor, his dinner parties were mostly official and unattended by ladies. On these occasions officers had to attend in cocked hats, epaulettes, and swords, in addition to their other garments, of course,

cela va sans dire. When the guests arrived they were ushered into the drawing-room by the flag-lieutenant in the orthodox manner, where they were received by their host. As soon as dinner was announced, the admiral said, "Gentlemen, we will take off our cocked hats and swords, and proceed to dinner," having done which the Commander-in-Chief led the way to the dining-room. Dinner was a very formal meal, and ended after the wine had been round once, for smoking was not indulged in. The admiral led the way back to the drawing-room, where he again addressed the company with the words: "Gentlemen, we will resume our cocked hats and swords." After about twenty minutes' conversation the senior guest left, quickly followed by the remainder.

The late Bishop Corfe told me the following story about Sir James when he was on the North American station. Corfe was appointed to a ship under the admiral's command, and being of a delicate constitution got permission from the Admiralty to grow a beard. In those days it was whiskers or nothing.

In due course, after he had taken up his appointment, his ship was inspected by the admiral, and the sight of the beard attracted the great man's attention.

"Who is that officer with his face covered with hair?" the captain was asked.

"That, sir, is the chaplain," was the reply.

"I wish to speak to him," said the admiral.

Corfe was accordingly called up, and asked why he was not complying with the regulations regarding the hair on his face.

He replied that he had Admiralty permission to grow a beard.

"I wish to see the order," said the admiral.

Corfe produced it, but after reading it carefully the admiral said :

" Mr. Corfe, I see you have permission to grow a beard, but there is no mention of a moustache, so you will please have that removed."

There was nothing more to be said, so the unfortunate chaplain had to go below and shave his upper lip !

My first admiral was Alfred Ryder, who hoisted his flag in the *Audacious*. He was hardly a typical sailor, being a scientist and very reserved. I don't remember much about him except that we ate his bananas when we had school in his fore cabin.

His successor, Charles Hillyar, was a much more cheery gentleman, who was a gay dog with the ladies, especially at Hong-Kong, where some of them said they were shocked at his overtures, which I don't believe. It takes a lot to shock Eastern ladies !

Ryder was a man who allowed no one to use bad language, but Charlie Hillyar had a fairly good repertoire himself. If the men didn't move smartly, he always explained their ancestral pedigrees to them and used other expressions explained by Dr. Johnson as " terms of endearment."

Perhaps the most astonishing old sea-dog I ever met was the captain of the *Shannon*, who was in China in 1878. On his way out to the station he placed his staff-commander under arrest fifty-six times. In addition to wearing the most extraordinary uniform, his language used to make the pitch run, it was so hot.

One day after drill he fell his men in on the quarter-deck, and told them that he had an old grandmother of ninety-two who would run up the main-rigging a damned sight faster than any of them would.

On another occasion when he was angry with his ship's company he told them they were all going to hell. "And," he added, "I'm going there too, and I'll make it damned hot for some of you."

Of course, like all men of his kind, his bark was a great deal worse than his bite.

When I was in one of the training brigs called the *Martin* we had one or two funny old birds in command of some of the other vessels. There were six of these little craft that used to knock about the Channel between Portsmouth and Falmouth. A senior lieutenant was in command of each.

Our skipper was a charming fellow and rose to high rank in the Navy. In one brig—I think it was the *Liberty*—there was a very fine officer in command. He was a seaman to his finger-tips, but he couldn't confine himself to a skipper's duties. They were too tame for him. Whenever there was any difficulty aloft he was always there, and, being a big strong fellow, he did the work of at least half a dozen boys.

We all admired him for being a great sailor, but he was never promoted, poor chap. He left the Navy a few years later and sailed before the mast as boat-swain of a black-baller.

I knew of another case of an officer who shipped before the mast after he left the service, and he was a well-known admiral called Vansittart. I believe he only did it to show the Admiralty that he was fit for anything when they retired him.

Another brig captain was a curious character. He distinguished himself by saluting the Prince of Wales with twenty-one guns at midnight when he entered Dartmouth Harbour in his yacht the *Formosa*.

A splendid sailor was John Crawford Wilson, who had his flag up in the *Agincourt* as rear-admiral when he was only forty-seven. He and Admiral Fullerton, who commanded the Queen's yacht, were both in the *Bombay* when she was burnt.

The *Bombay* was out at target practice off Monte Video, and when the men were piped to dinner nearly all the guns were left loaded. About half an hour or so later the ship was discovered to be on fire.

The hands were at once turned up and the crew went to fire stations. While the boats were being got out the flames were coming up the main hatchway and the falls of the mainstay were burnt through as the last boat was clear of the crutches and she fell across the nettings.

A few minutes later the ship was practically cut in two by the fire, and it became so hot that officers and men who hadn't got into the boats were obliged to jump overboard.

Many were in the water under the bows hanging on to ropes, and the molten lead from the gammoning of the bowsprit was falling on their heads and killing them.

To make matters worse the loaded guns were going off and the shots were striking the boats which were much overcrowded. One of the launches was in such danger of being swamped that the marines sat round the gunwale as close as they could be packed in order to keep her dry, as she was almost level with the water and the sea was very lippy.

Fortunately the homeward-bound mail steamer was leaving Monte Video at noon, and the moment she saw the *Bombay* on fire she put on full speed and arrived on the scene in time to save the lives of those

of the crew who had managed to reach the boats. There was great loss of life ; but it would have been much greater if it had not been for the timely arrival of the mail boat. Wilson behaved with great bravery and was promoted.

In the *Agincourt* our admiral was much younger than his flag-captain, and I often felt very sorry for the latter, as Wilson often spoke to him as if he was a midshipman, but our admiral was a splendid fellow. He stood well over six feet and was of course a great seaman.

In the old days before I joined the service, women were often taken to sea. I have seen it done twice, once in North America and once in China. On the former occasion I was on watch during the afternoon of the second day out, after leaving Bermuda for Halifax, when I saw three sailors suddenly come on the quarter-deck and walk up and down, arm in arm, with three women.

I couldn't believe my eyes and sent for the commander, the late Sir George Callaghan, and asked him what I should do about it. With an amused expression, he told me they were the admiral's servants, and I had better leave them alone, which I did.

This reminds me of the commander of the *Agincourt*, J. C. Burnell, who once punished the admiral's cook for not lashing up his hammock. He was sent for by the admiral, who said :

"Captain Burnell, I could easily get another commander, but I should find the greatest difficulty in getting another cook."

The case in China was not quite so bad, as we had no female servants on board.

Bobby Smart was one of the notorious admirals of

the sixties. When he was appointed to command the Mediterranean station, he took in his retinue eight women, including his family. He was a non-smoker and insisted on his officers being non-smokers too.

This practice of carrying women on board ship was one that ought never to have been allowed. It always led to trouble and upset the discipline of a ship.

Another odd fish of those days was Dicky Dawkins. It was told of him that when he first commanded a steamship, he was under sail and steam together on one occasion when he was entering harbour.

The sails were taken in, but the ship went gaily on and piled up on the beach, as the engines hadn't been stopped. When she struck, the skipper lamented, "Oh lor ! oh lor ! I did forget she was a steamer !"

While I was a midshipman, our senior Admiral of the Fleet was Provo Wallis. He was one of the lieutenants of the *Shannon* when she took the *Chesapeake* in fourteen minutes off Boston Harbour in the early part of the nineteenth century. The Americans haven't got over that licking yet.

That reminds me: I was taking an American lady round Greenwich College once, and was showing her the silver plate in the mess-room. She was full of praise for everything. At last I said:

"I must show you the *Endymion* Cups, they are the finest ones we've got."

"How kind of you," she replied, "I should so like to see them." Her delight was complete when she saw the cups, for they are very handsome.

"Say, what is the history of those cups?" she asked.

"They were given to the *Endymion* by the inhabi-

tants of Bermuda, for capturing an American frigate much bigger than herself," I answered.

"Well, I don't think much of those cups, anyway," and with that she turned on her heel and went off to get some fresh air. The blow had been too sudden. She nearly fainted.

One funny old sea-dog was Sir Algernon Lyons. He was a dear, but very volcanic. After the eruptions he used to weep, which showed he had a kind heart. He was the son of the Crimean admiral. I don't think I have ever met such a peppery man. When he was in command of the North American station, he used to spend the early winter at Admiralty House, Bermuda.

It was an understood thing that the officer who boarded the mail steamer on Sundays should take the letters to Admiralty House and stay to breakfast. This was not generally a popular entertainment, as there was invariably an explosion during the meal. The admiral always wanted to know so much which the wretched lieutenant couldn't tell him, and that led to trouble.

One of our lieutenants went over one day, and was asked if Mrs. So-and-so was on board. As the officer of the guard had never heard the name before, he knew nothing about the lady. When he told the admiral this, the little man jumped up and danced round the table, laying off all the while in strong language about the incapacity of all young officers and this one in particular, till at last the boy fled from the room and returned to his ship. Later he was asked to dinner, and the admiral was quite nice to him.

This sort of thing often happened; but for all that

we loved the admiral, and were really more amused than hurt over these little episodes.

I knew another Commander-in-Chief who always said good night to his guests directly he rose from the dining-table. They then trooped out saying, "Thank God, that's over." I always admired his courage. This old boy was rather a hard nut and invariably turned his back on the person he was addressing, with the result that his remarks were frequently not understood. This annoyed him very much, and led to trouble. He had a curious habit of limiting the number of fingers he gave you when he shook hands, according to his appreciation of you. But notwithstanding his peculiarities he had a very kind nature and was generally admired.

Admirals are very often curious creatures and they should be handled with great caution, like hand-grenades, as you never know when they will explode. A lady acquaintance of mine got the shock of her life when she sat next one at dinner one night. He was quite a good sort really, but on the evening in question something had disturbed his equilibrium and he was very restrained in his conversation. The lady was feeling very uncomfortable, as he hadn't addressed a word to her the whole of dinner, and feeling that she ought to try and open the conversation, she at last screwed up enough courage to say, "Do you play golf, Admiral?" He turned towards her and replied with withering scorn, "Good God, woman, no." The unhappy lady, feeling the hopelessness of the situation, gave up the unequal contest.

I once knew a fiery-tempered old gentleman, who used to get very angry with his flag-lieutenant, and on one occasion threw a flower-pot at the young officer,

as he was making a rapid retreat from the presence after a slight difference of opinion. Fortunately the missile missed its mark.

At a certain naval dockyard, which was ruled over by the Admiral Superintendent because the naval Commander-in-Chief was some distance away, there was an admiral who was very pernickety about details of ceremony. He considered that it was impossible to unite the duties of Senior Naval Officer with those of Dockyard Superintendent, and invented a sort of dual personality for carrying out his functions. As Senior Naval Officer he demanded the attendance of all officers, who desired to see him, in frock-coats and swords. When coming to see the Admiral Superintendent officers were requested to attend in ordinary undress. This led to some inconvenience, as it often necessitated a commanding officer having to carry the two dresses with him, as the admiral insisted on his orders being carried out to the letter. The procedure would be something like this: Captain Jones, of the torpedo destroyer *Nufsed*, would arrive at the admiral's office with a parcel under his arm. He would ask the orderly if he could see the Admiral Superintendent. The orderly would give two knocks and open the door. After a few moments a voice would say, "Advance, orderly, and make your report."

"The captain of the *Nufsed* wishes to see the Admiral Superintendent, sir."

"Show the captain in, please."

The orderly then retired and admitted the captain, who found the admiral seated at the centre of the table. He was invited to sit down.

"Well, sir?" said the admiral.

"I am Captain Jones, of H.M. destroyer *Nufsed*,

and I am under orders from my own admiral to rejoin the fleet to-morrow. The dockyard officials say that they cannot possibly finish their work in time to let my ship go to sea before next Monday. What am I to do, sir ? ”

“ You will have to wait till your defects are completed,” replied the Admiral Superintendent.

“ But I must go to sea to-morrow, sir. It is imperative.”

“ You were given so many days for the dockyard to repair your ship and the time does not expire till Monday, so I am afraid there is no more to be said, Captain Jones. Good morning.”

The captain at once retired and, as soon as he got outside the door, opened his little parcel and changed his uniform to a frock-coat and sword. He then informed the orderly that he desired to see the Senior Naval Officer. He was immediately admitted to the admiral's presence and found him seated at the end of the table.

“ Are you Captain Jones of the *Nufsed* ? ” asked the admiral.

“ Yes, sir,” replied the captain, standing. He was not asked to sit down, this time.

“ I have come to report to you, sir, that I am under orders to proceed to sea at daylight to-morrow. The only defects on board my ship that are not completed can be done at sea as well as in harbour, yet the dockyard officials refuse to release me. I have seen the Admiral Superintendent, but he won't help me, so I have come to you, sir, as the Senior Naval Officer, to ask you if you will be good enough to bring pressure to bear so that I can sail early to-morrow morning.”

"Very well, sir," replied the admiral, "I will see what I can do."

An hour later a signal was made telling the *Nufsed* that she would leave the port at 4 a.m. and the dockyard would complete the defects at sea.

Naval officers of the present day, who are usually so correct in their uniform, would be astounded if they could see the extraordinary combinations of dress which their predecessors of forty or fifty years ago used to wear. The chief offenders were captains of ships, so it is not to be wondered at that the junior officers were also somewhat careless in this respect. There was no regulation about white uniform, consequently officers wore just what they liked on tropical stations.

I have seen a post-captain wear a tall white hat over his uniform frock-coat. He was a very short man and the effect was comical, but that didn't stop his making quite a habit of it. I knew another captain who thought that the gold lace on his sleeves was an unnecessary expense, so he abolished it as far as he was personally concerned. He wore a plain blue serge reefer with brass buttons, and an ordinary straw hat on his head.

I remember another commanding officer who had a special black alpaca frock-coat made for hot climates. It was so thin that his red braces were plainly seen through it. An admiral I served with in China always wore a Chefoo silk jacket in hot weather without any marks of distinction whatsoever. His headgear was a solar topee. Waistcoats were either double-breasted or single as it took your fancy. The rorty midshipman always wore the former kind and sometimes a

double-breasted jacket as well. Caps were of the small-crowned type with much licence in peaks. Some of these were straight-out ones, commonly called cheese-cutters, others were turned down, but the angle varied.

In the early eighties some naval Beau Brummel introduced rather a smart effect by wearing what he was pleased to call "A guard's cap." This took on for a bit and many of the dressy lieutenants adopted it, but it soon became unfashionable and dropped out. Boots of course were of all sorts, shapes and sizes. Elastic-sided ones were quite popular. As a midshipman I bought my footgear from a Chinaman called Hobi at Hong-Kong, who supplied me with the best pigskin shoes for a dollar the pair.

On one occasion, after a long voyage, I was obliged to invest in a pair of what were known as "purser's crabs," which I bought from the ship's steward for 3s. 6d., but they looked so appalling that whenever I went on deck I hid my feet under a coil of rope so that no one could see them. We boys were always so poor that we were forced to buy the cheapest article in the market. It took nearly six months to get an answer to a letter from home, and a midshipman with a cheque-book was an unknown quantity, so no wonder we were mostly destitute. One had constantly to fall back on the ship's stores in order to complete one's wardrobe, as ships went on cruises which lasted for several months. In these days some officers have minor dress peculiarities, but they are so trifling as not to deserve notice here, in fact they only amount to a button or two.

I think I should mention that I served in a ship once where the admiral had his wife on board. This

lady wore a blue reefer jacket with admiral's stripes on the sleeve.

I remember one first voyage after commissioning, when we were under all plain sail with our screw up. There was a steady breeze from the north-east, which just allowed us to carry our royals, and our good ship slipped along silently through the smooth water like gossamer, as we left the white cliffs of Dover far astern.

Many of us were anxious to see the topmast studding sails set, but our sea-wise captain knew better. We had a very young ship company and for a first attempt at real seamanship we had gone far enough. No doubt he remembered the loss of the *Eurydice* off Ventnor, when a squall came down over the land and capsized her, when she was within an hour's run from her anchorage at Spithead. Only two men were saved out of her whole ship's company. The sad part of it was that the ship was coming home from the West Indies and all the relatives were waiting at Portsmouth to welcome her home, knowing that she was in sight and quite near.

Sailors, who have been brought up entirely in vessels propelled by screws, can have no idea of the thrilling sensation of being on the bridge or poop of a sailing ship, when she is laying over to it in a smooth sea :

“ Throwing each rude and bursting surge in glittering splashes back,

And heaving high to heaven aloft the British Union Jack.”

The officer of the watch, holding on to the rails in the weather dickey, was perhaps getting a little anxious as he eyed the white foam rushing past the lee scuppers. He glanced to windward and noticed

that the wind had freshened and drawn forward a point. His voice quickly rang out along the deck, "Topmen of the watch, in royals." Immediately the boatswain's mate's whistle was heard, followed by his repeated cry, and before the sound had died away, some of the royal yardmen were in the rigging. Up the weather side they went, stopping for a breather in the top, and then on to the masthead.

Meanwhile on deck the yards were lowered and the royals clewed up by the topmen not aloft. Orders were given by the officer of the watch and instantly obeyed. The men aloft lay out on the yards and quickly had the sails furled. Although the ship was only just commissioned the men were down on deck again within ten minutes. Later on they would take just half that time.

This change eased the ship a little, but as time went on the officer of the watch again looked anxiously to windward. The captain was on deck now, watching his young lieutenant, and noted with great satisfaction that he was alert and keen. The rest would come. He wanted him to take the initiative now. It would give him sea courage, so he waited. The young man wasn't quite sure of his captain yet. Shyness it was really. He waited too. The captain got fidgety. "Now, Mr. So-and-so," he said, "why don't you give your orders?" "Shall I take the topgallant sails in, sir?" asked the lieutenant. "My God," cried the captain, "topgallant sails, sir? No, certainly not. Take the mainsail off." "Watch, up mainsail," rang out instant and the officer of the watch was as quickly forgiven.

What a real seaman cannot stand is hesitation. I have seen about the finest seaman in the Navy become

almost demented because a young sub-lieutenant, who was on watch, couldn't emit a sound from his mouth but gasps when he was told to fall the watch in. On this occasion our young lieutenant was all there, but he was a little anxious about doing the right thing and only wanted experience. As soon as he knew what his captain wanted he went ahead quickly enough, manning the clew-garnets and bunt-lines and stationing hands by the maintack and mainsheet.

Falconer's words came to his mind :

" And he, who strives the tempest to disarm,
Will never first embraile the lee yard-arm."

But this is no gale and the wind is free, so he eased the sheet a little to take the strain off the tack and ran up both clews together. The captain questioned him afterwards on this point, but finding that the young officer was fully alive to the situation made no further comment.

The ship was now bowling along under a fairly stiff breeze towards St. Catherine's and no further alteration was made till after evening quarters, when the hands were turned up to take in the first reef in the topsails. We all knew now that it was the captain's intention to make a running moor at Portland under sail that night, and most of us were a little anxious as to results, as all hands were new at their jobs.

As we approached the breakwater fort shortly before midnight, both anchors were cleared away and the compressors were put back, and careful instructions were given to the cable officers. Two special officers were stationed on the fore mess deck, through which the cables passed, to note, by means of lanterns,

what shackles came up out of the lockers. The port cable came up through the master-at-arms' mess, and the starboard one passed through that of the ship's corporals'. The orders were that as soon as the ninth shackle came up out of the port chain locker the starboard anchor was to be let go. It all sounded very easy : but wait.

We were all at our stations as we rounded the fort, and the topgallant sails and foresail were taken in. As the wind was now almost a fresh gale, the ship was slipping along at a good rate, and the topsails were lowered on the cap. But as always happens with a sailing ship, when you want to stop her, she insists on going all the faster, and under bare poles we simply flew up to our anchorage.

When the order was given to let go the first anchor, the officers on the mess deck thought the end of the world had come. The cable seemed to scream with rage as it tore up through the compressors, clanking from side to side and taking the bulkhead around the master-at-arms' mess with it. The whole deck was a blaze of light from the sparks which flew in every direction, and officers and men were driven for safety into remote corners.

Thinking that the cable was almost out to a clinch, the officer in charge gave the signal for the second anchor to be let go. Then it seemed as if hell had been let loose. Never was there such a din, and the whole place seemed on fire. At last orders came to "bouse to" both compressors. At first this seemed impossible as they would not hold the cable, but finally a good nip was got on either side and the appalling pandemonium ended. When we came to examine things we found that we were almost out to a

clinch on our first cable and three shackles short of it on our second.

The state of the mess-deck was astounding. The two messes on either side, through which the cables passed, had disappeared, and the whole deck was strewn with the wreckage of broken bulkheads and lockers. As everyone was tired after the long day, the hands were piped down and we lay for the night as we were. The next day after breakfast we had a lot to do. What astounded most of us was the fact that only three shackles had run out on the first cable when the second anchor was let go. It shows how a little noise and excitement will upset the most careful calculations. However it was a fine bit of work on the part of our skipper to bring his ship into harbour under sail at the dead of night with a crew of youngsters, and we were all proud of him.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHANNEL FLEET CONTROVERSY

DURING my career in the Navy before the war, the two flag officers who, in my humble opinion, towered above all their contemporaries, were Sir Arthur Wilson and Lord Charles Beresford [afterwards Lord Beresford]. Both men were possessed of all the qualities which are required to produce great admirals in war, and it was unfortunate for the country and for themselves that neither of them were born twenty years later than they were.

The two men were dissimilar in their characters and in their methods; but both achieved the same result—efficiency. Each of them inspired absolute confidence in those who served under them, and both were popular in their fleets.

As regards popularity, Wilson never courted it, while Lord Charles thirsted for it. The former was an extraordinarily reserved man, and he carried this almost to a fault, while the latter erred perhaps in the other direction. A composite character of the two admirals would have been as near perfection as human nature could allow.

The best way to judge of an admiral is mentally to tabulate the opinions of those who have served with him and know him well, and not to put any faith in

the estimation of those who are in another fish-pond.

Petty jealousies exist in every walk of life, and the Navy is no exception. For many years I used to think that every nautical mind was "open, brave and free," but after I reached the higher ranks I found myself amongst self-complacency, uncharitableness towards others and subtle jealousies to such a marked extent that my love for the service received a rude awakening. The band of brothers that we have all heard so much about never existed in any fleet that I served in.

When I commanded my first battleship, and joined the Channel Fleet, I naturally concluded that I would be warmly welcomed by all the captains, but it was not so. Two of the senior captains, who were ten years my senior in age, never even condescended to speak to me. That was a nice beginning. Later on I found that there wasn't much friendship between any of the senior ones, so I gave up all hope of the "Happy Band" and palled up with one or two skippers of my own age.

There was one strong point in Wilson, he was always charmingly polite, and very just in his decisions. Lord Charles played too much to the gallery, and consequently would be rude if it suited him. I remember the first information I got about the Beresford-Scott incident. A signalman came down to my cabin and read me the signal which Lord Charles had made to the fleet in reference to Sir Percy's signal to his squadron about the paintwork. A cold shudder ran down my back as I thought of the consequences of giving such publicity to what was a severe reprimand to a brother flag-officer. I knew it must get into the press and do the Navy harm, so I felt it was

the beginning of a big row and I regretted it deeply—and it was.

The facts of the case were these. On November 1, 1907, the following memorandum was issued by Lord Charles Beresford to all the ships concerned :—

“ The fleet will leave Portland on the 9th of November for Spithead to receive H.I.M. the German Emperor. The ships are to be in all respects ready for sea and painted externally.”

The First Cruiser Squadron, under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir Percy Scott, reached Portland first and, when the Battle Squadron arrived, the *Roxburgh* was lying outside the breakwater.

On November 4, Sir Percy made the signal from his flagship, the *Good Hope*, to the *Roxburgh* :

“ Paintwork appears to be more in demand than gunnery, so you had better come in in time to look pretty by the 8th inst.”

On November 8, Lord Charles made the following signal to all the fleet :

“ The Lords of the Admiralty, having directed me to prepare the Channel Fleet to do honour to H.I.M. the German Emperor, an order was given to all the vessels under my command to be out of routine, and paint ship after the manœuvres.

“ With reference to my order on Monday, November 4, the rear-admiral commanding the First Cruiser Squadron, a squadron forming part of the Channel Fleet, made the following signal to the captain of the *Roxburgh* :

“ ‘ Paintwork appears to be more in demand than gunnery ; so you had better come in in time to look pretty by the 8th inst.’

“ In regard to my order to the fleet to paint ship,

this signal made by the rear-admiral commanding the First Cruiser Squadron is contemptuous in tone and insubordinate in character. The rear-admiral is to issue orders to the *Good Hope* and *Roxburgh* to expunge the signal from their logs and to report to me by signal when my orders have been obeyed." *

Later the cruiser admiral was ordered to proceed on board the flagship, where Lord Charles interviewed him on the quarter-deck, in the presence of the other admirals, and expressed to him his opinion very forcibly on what had occurred. The matter went to the Admiralty, and the First Sea Lord (Fisher) took Admiral Scott's part, and a bitter controversy arose which lasted for months.

As one of Beresford's captains I bitterly regretted his action in sowing the seeds for publicity by making a general signal which was certain to get into the press. The matter should have been dealt with by confidential letter. To reprimand a flag-officer by public signal was derogatory to discipline and should never have been done.

The action of the First Sea Lord was never officially revealed to any of us, but it was an open secret that Lord Charles did not receive the support that most of us thought was his due. In a purely small personal matter of this kind the Commander-in-Chief must be upheld in his decisions whether they are open to question or not.

The Admiralty, by their action, made the question ten times more serious than it was at first and many of us forgot the trivial incident of the signal, and blamed Fisher for not making a diplomatic move which would have saved the Navy from public derision and have satisfied everyone concerned. Although I

had nothing whatever to do with the incident and took no part in the controversy, I just felt that I wanted to get away somewhere into the fresh air, and so I jeopardised my future by accepting an appointment in Japan, where internal dissensions would not come my way.

The tendency to make unwise and sometimes very rude signals was very prevalent in the Navy at that time and before. I have frequently seen the flag-ship's semaphore spitting forth venom to some poor unoffending captain, just because his officer of the watch had got a little out of line, or was astern of his station, or may be it was because the lower booms were not square with the water, or a sailor's hat wasn't on straight.

I suppose this tendency to rudeness on the semaphore is a natural corollary of the days of masts and yards, when everybody abused everybody else in the excitement of sail drill. Some captains used to be awful in their language and seemed to spare no one. To repeat an example would be impossible, as it would contain nothing but dashes, representing unprintable words like this: "You — — — why the — — don't you let the — rope go?" To be called a damned fool was like being offered government ale; it was so mild. Still there is no excuse for rudeness in the Navy.

Supposing a general officer was inspecting a division and he suddenly called for a megaphone and announced down it to the whole body of troops that the Colonel of the Blankshires was the biggest idiot he had ever seen in his life, it would be just on a par with what I have often seen done by signal in the Navy.

Once when the fleet was lying at Portland the

Commander-in-Chief found fault with one of his battleships for not being smart-looking enough. He signalled to the fleet announcing the fact and stopping the leave of the captain, officers and ship's company until further orders because the ship was dirty. A week later Lord Charles went on board his yacht, the *Surprise*, and steamed round the offending battleship, spending a couple of hours on his criticisms.

Now this sort of thing breeds discord. Wilson's way would have been to send for the captain and tell him quietly what was required of him, and the next day the wrong would have been put right. Wilson's way was the better way.

But for all Beresford's failings in small matters of this nature, I feel certain that he would have been a Colossus in command of the Grand Fleet at the beginning of the war. Three years earlier he would have had the command naturally, and there never would have been any doubt about the result of an action that he was in.

Wilson was a splendid fellow, but I would sooner have served in action under Charlie B., as he had a splendid staff and trusted them implicitly, while they were full of confidence in their Chief. Wilson was too fond of keeping his own counsel. He was probably a much cleverer man than Beresford, but the latter had an indomitable Nelsonian spirit which, in action, would have been imparted to everyone under his command. The lower-deck loved him, and so did all who knew him well. That he did not become the greatest hero of the war of 1914-18 was simply due to the fact that he came into this world a few years too soon.

During the three years I served in the Channel

Fleet there were many personal incidents which were very distasteful to me, and made me feel that the life of a captain of a battleship was not as happy as one would like it to be. When my time was up I would, in the ordinary course of events, have been given command of a Dreadnought, but the Fisher controversy had made me long to get away out of it all, and hearing that a captain was wanted to go out as naval attaché to Japan, I volunteered for the appointment and got it.

My future career was affected by this move, for had I continued in the fleet I would have commanded a battle squadron during the Great War, but I am not sure that I didn't do the wisest thing for myself in the path I chose. Anyway, I have no regrets now.

My particular friend amongst my brother captains was Kit Cradock, who lost his life in the Pacific Ocean at the commencement of the war. The story of how his flagship, the *Good Hope*, was sunk off the coast of Chili is too well known to be repeated here. Cradock would be best described as a Yorkshire gentleman, which conveys a lot. Genial, brave, keen about his work and a thorough sportsman, he had a charm of manner which was captivating. No captain handled his ship better, and none gave a better dinner or was a more delightful host.

Amongst his many accomplishments Cradock was an author of some merit. He had written a sporting book about the China station, and had published a book on seamanship which was widely read by naval men. He was a dear fellow, and his death, though glorious, was a very great loss to the Navy and to his many friends all over the world.

Why he was a bachelor I never knew. Probably he never met the girl he cared for sufficiently.

While I commanded the *Ocean*, 1905 to 1908, the fleet spent a great deal of its time at Portland. The breakwater made it a very good harbour for a number of ships to lie in, as there was plenty of room and good holding ground for the anchors. The protection afforded was excellent, and although the water was sometimes rough for boating it was never bad enough, even in the heaviest gale, to endanger the shipping. Formerly, before the breakwater was built, it was not at all pleasant to be there in an easterly or south-easterly gale. The first time I was stationed at Portland was in the eighties, when I was flag-lieutenant in the *Agincourt*.

The fleet was under the command of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, and consisted of six battleships, or ironclads as they were called in those days. The two flagships, the *Minotaur* and the *Agincourt*, were five-masters and very beautiful to look upon. Those were the days when every officer and man regarded his ship as a thing of loveliness, and if a yard was not square, or a rope was not taut, it was looked upon as a reflection upon everyone who belonged to her.

It was a happy life too. We certainly had our troubles over sail drill and were cursed freely when we made mistakes, but no one bore any malice. There was good fellowship in the atmosphere, as the following anecdote will show. I went on board the flagship one day to make some enquiries about the routine. At the moment when I arrived everyone appeared very busy, and I was standing on the quarter-deck looking round for someone to make my enquiries of,

when the commander, Charlie L'Estrange, saw me, and coming up to me said, "What can I do for you, flag-lieutenant?" I told him what I had come about, and he replied, "Well, I won't let it be said that anyone was ever inhospitably received on board the *Minotaur*, so you must come down to my cabin first and split a pint of champagne."

The commander had a charming cabin on the main deck, and we hadn't been there more than a few minutes when in walked H.R.H. the Admiral.

"Hullo! Charlie," he said, "what are you doing?"

"We were just going to split a pint, Your Royal Highness; would you care to join us?"

"I think I would," said the Admiral, and the order was given for a quart bottle, which we soon emptied of its contents.

Poor Charlie L'Estrange was one of the best of fellows and would have risen high in the service; but his domestic affairs went all wrong. He died as a commander, only a few years later, under somewhat distressing circumstances.

H.R.H. was not lucky in the selection of his staff. They were either very unpopular or something went wrong with them.

From the pleasure point of view, Portland's only attraction was its proximity to Weymouth and the ease with which the latter place could be reached. For small ships, which lay near the shore, there was always the train service between the two places, but the bigger ships found it easier to run their own steamboats direct to Weymouth pier. There was also a service of steamers which carried the liberty men periodically during the day.

About a century ago Weymouth was very much

patronised by George III, and in his time was one of our most popular watering-places. With a better train service and a few more local attractions it would wake itself up to its former prosperity, but for its size Weymouth to-day is not what it might become with a little enterprise. Perhaps there are those who live there who prefer to keep it as it is, and I don't blame them, for there is an old-world charm about the place which makes it very attractive.

The almost circular bay and its lovely beach, which stretches for miles, the men-of-war constantly on the move, the swans, the lobster teas, the wishing-well and all the other delights of the neighbourhood, to say nothing of the splendid pier and sundry indoor amusements, should certainly draw a large number of people to this delightful little Dorset town.

I candidly confess that I love Weymouth. I have been there repeatedly during the last forty years, and it is one of the few places of its kind that has hardly changed at all. Beyond a new hotel and a new pier the old front remains as it was when I first knew it.

One of the most interesting things that I came across was in an old lodging-house near the Royal Hotel. It was a house in which George III had stayed during one of his many visits. The lid of a certain seat had the royal coat-of-arms on it. I thought it was priceless.

Whenever the fleet was likely to remain any time at Portland, I brought my wife down from Scotland, and she generally stayed at the Royal Hotel. She used to be much entertained by the amount of scandal that was talked there. The hotel itself was a very comfortable one, the cuisine was excellent, the rooms were good and the prices were moderate, besides which

there was a delightful string band which played really well, and drew large audiences twice a day.

Sailors' wives naturally were in predominance and were usually joined in the evenings by their husbands from the fleet. As a rule the place was peaceful enough, but now and again the rowdy element would blow in and then things used to hum. On one occasion I remember a commander and his wife had a stand-up fight in the passage outside their bedroom, and on another the wife of the captain of a battleship drank too much, and made an awful idiot of herself after dinner; but as a rule most of the guests behaved themselves well. The only thing I took exception to was the violent criticisms that used to go on of the senior officers of the fleet. A certain admiral used to come down from London periodically and stay at the hotel and was most unwise in what he said. He always talked very loudly, as if inviting an audience, and thought nothing of tearing our Commander-in-Chief to pieces. I thought it was horrible. Of course some of the women used to repeat what he said, and it did great harm.

But apart from these examples of thoughtless indiscretion the Royal was a very nice place to stay at, and most of us were very happy. My wife had a small puppy, which was a mischievous little beast and used to play about on the veranda outside her bedroom. One day the lady next door left her window open, and the pup sauntered in seeking what he could devour. A little later the animal came back with a mass of hair in his mouth which he had evidently been having the time of his life with. My wife was horrified to find that it was evidently the remains of some female's *toupet*.

She at once rang for the maid and explained the situation to her. Fortunately the lady next door was away for the day, so they went together into her room to see what had happened. The whole place was in disorder. The cover had been pulled off the dressing-table and articles of every description were scattered on the floor. The powder-box was spilt and bits of hair lay about everywhere, making the room look as if some desperate tragedy had been enacted. With the assistance of the maid my wife soon got everything tidy, and as far as was possible the tangled mass of hair was restored to some resemblance of its former appearance and replaced on the table. The next morning the room was vacant, so we never heard any more of the incident.

When we first commissioned the *Ocean* we had no midshipmen, and one day when I was visiting Captain Adair of the *Montague* we passed all his boys at work at the tables just outside his cabin. As we passed them Adair turned to me and said, "You haven't got any midshipmen, have you?" "No, thank God, I haven't," I replied. A week later the *Montague* was wrecked and all her midshipmen were sent to the *Ocean*.

I didn't really dislike midshipmen, but we had a charming parson, a man called Morgan, who was not a naval instructor, and I knew I would lose him as soon as any midshipmen joined my ship. Poor Morgan was lost afterwards at the battle of Jutland. He was quite the nicest naval chaplain I ever met. One boy who came to me from the *Montague* was rather a curious chap. He hated the Navy and had never wished to join, but his people had forced him to. He had wanted to become a parson and still felt

that he had taken up his wrong vocation in life.

I had some correspondence with his father about this, who was very angry with his son for wanting to leave the service. It was rather a difficult situation, but I succeeded in meeting it with some success. I remembered that Nelson, when a young midshipman, had been fed-up with the Navy at first, until his uncle, Captain Suckling, had put him in the responsible position of running the mails between Sheerness and Woolwich. This had the astonishing effect of completely changing the boy's ideas about the service. So, much to the displeasure of our commander, I gave our young friend, who was our junior midshipman, command of the picket-boat, which in ordinary times was run by the senior one. The effect was astounding. At once the boy began to show a keenness that he had never shown before. To help him further I asked him to make use of my cabin during his spare time, and I gave him *The Autobiography of a Seaman* to read, in which he was very soon absorbed.

The change in six months was wonderful ; the boy who, I was told, hadn't a chance of passing, and took no interest in his work whatever, got through his exams. quite well, and served a commission as sub-lieutenant on the Mediterranean station after leaving my command, where he was very happy. Later on, when his father died, he left the service and joined the Church ; but had he remained he would certainly have become an ornament to his profession.

The poor old *Montague's* bones lie on Lundy Island. When she left Portland on her last voyage she followed the *Ocean* down channel. The last we saw of her was when she turned up round Land's End to

make for the Bristol Channel, while we stood off to the westward to engage in the wireless experiments which the fleet were then to carry out. That night a thick fog came on which enveloped the whole of the British Isles. The *Ocean* was all right as we were in the open sea ; but the poor old *Montague* got lost amongst the cross currents and tides around Lundy, and struck a ledge of rocks just under the lighthouse of the island, becoming a total wreck.

It was very hard luck on her gallant captain, who was a splendid officer.

Fogs are the curse of all sailors ; but the captain of a fleet battleship feels their danger more than anyone else. It is marvellous that there are not more accidents. There are no captains who have not had their hearts in their mouths pretty often, or who have not been within an ace of collision.

Wilson was a perfect demon at taking the fleet to sea in thick weather. He seemed to love a fog. On one occasion he took a fleet of nearly twenty ships out of Portland harbour, when the fog was so dense that it was impossible to see even the outline of the next ship in the line.

The occasion was the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales on their return from India. They had put into Portland in the *Renown* and the fleet were ordered to precede them next morning to Spit-head and be there in time to fire the Royal salute as the *Renown* entered the harbour.

We were all up at our stations at 5 a.m. in readiness for the signal to weigh. The fog was awful, for you could not see the Jack-staff from the bridge. To make things worse the hand fog-horn was being used for signalling instead of the steam syren, so as not

to disturb Their Royal Highnesses on board the *Renown*.

The *Ocean* was the end ship of the inner line and nearest to Weymouth. There were three openings in the breakwater through which vessels could pass in or out. One of these led direct to the southward ; one led to the eastward close round the fort, and the third was nearer Weymouth. All were equally usable for single ships ; but to facilitate the movements of a fleet certain vessels were ordered to go out by certain entrances.

The signal to weigh was taken in by the *Ocean*, the farthest ship from the flagship, but further signals, though indistinctly heard, were not understood. There was no time for meditation, so I decided to leave by the northern entrance as it was fairly close to where I was lying. After the anchor was clear of the water I put the engines to slow ahead, and set the speed at six knots, making for the northern entrance. The navigating officer came to me and said, " Don't you think we are going too fast, sir ? " Remembering the danger of altering my speed in fog without signal I said, " No, we must go thirty-six revolutions," so on we went.

On our side of the breakwater hole were two buoys, one on either side, and one of these had just been sighted on the starboard bow when the officer of the fore-castle called out, " The hole in the breakwater is right ahead, sir." This at once told me which buoy it was that we had sighted. A minute later he called out, " It is the breakwater, sir, not the hole." I thereupon put both engines to full speed astern, but it was too late. Owing to the mistake on the fore-castle we had mistaken the buoy and passed on its wrong side.

The way of the ship was not stopped when our stem struck the breakwater and we gently slid up its side of large blocks of cement. The bow rose about ten feet and then, as the engines were still going full speed astern, we gently slid off again, so I at once stopped the port engine and let her bow swing round to where I now knew the entrance was.

While this was going on the cruiser squadron came rushing past us. We could not see them, but their syrens were sounding their fleet numbers, so we waited to let them get through and then crawled out into Weymouth bay. A quick examination showed that no serious damage had been done to the *Ocean*, so we followed the fleet towards Portsmouth. We could hear their syrens a good distance ahead, so it was quite safe to increase my speed, but, although we were going nine knots, the fleet gradually drew away from us until we could not hear their syrens any more.

The fog was still very thick, so I decided to make straight for St. Catherine's, and fix my position by its fog-horn. This we did and eventually made out the land. The fog then began to clear away and we saw the lighthouse distinctly. We then increased our speed to fourteen knots, and ran along the coast of the Isle of Wight towards Ventnor in perfectly clear weather. Two miles off the shore was a thick band of fog, and shortly after passing Ventnor we saw the wireless masts of some ships apparently at anchor. We reduced speed at once, and steering towards them found they belonged to some of our own fleet, so we dropped our anchor two and a half cables off one of them and waited for the fog to lift.

About an hour later it became quite clear and we found we were anchored in our proper position in the

line and, when the admiral made the signal to weigh, we got our anchor up and proceeded with the fleet to Spithead as if nothing had happened. We heard afterwards that the admiral hadn't even missed us.

When we had anchored off Portsmouth I sent our divers down to examine the stem of the ship and report what damage had been done. After an hour's examination they reported that they could not find anything wrong, so I had my boat manned and went on board the flagship, where I reported the whole incident to Admiral Wilson. After listening to my report the admiral said, "Well, Dundas, I don't think we will say anything about it." I then thanked him and returned to my ship.

The next day we all went back to Portland, and naturally enough I looked to see if anything had happened to the breakwater. What was our surprise to find that several blocks of cement had been dislodged and had formed a kind of pier which jutted out about twenty feet into the harbour. It was very evident that the *Ocean* had got the best of the encounter, and, though it was not a laughing matter at the time, I can't help smiling now.

The first thing I did on arrival at Portland was to fall all hands in and tell them exactly what I had done and what the admiral had said. I then begged them all not to speak about the accident to anyone outside the ship, or write any letters home on the subject. That they loyally supported me in this I knew quite well, because it was weeks before even any of my brother captains knew what had happened.

But the funny part was when we first noticed a party of men come along the breakwater and examine the new pier, apparently at their wits' end to know

what had happened. Then they rigged up a pair of shears and for weeks the engineers struggled with the dislodged cement and tried to get it back into its place, little knowing that the culprits were watching them and having a quiet laugh at their expense.

Later on, when my ship went to Chatham for her annual refit, she was put in dry dock for examination of her underwater fittings, and I went down to see if any trace of the collision with the breakwater could be noticed, but she hadn't even a scratch anywhere. The brave old ship had fought her battle well and certainly deserved the champion belt for having created a world's record.

The poor old *Ocean* now lies at the bottom of the sea, having been sunk during the Great War of 1914-18.

CHAPTER XIV

THEATRICALS ON BOARD SHIP

"All work and no joy
Makes Jack a dull boy."

IT cannot be said that Jack is a dull boy in the British Navy. If he is, it is entirely his own fault, as the opportunities for amusement are very frequent. No matter what your particular tastes may be, you will be able to satisfy them in the service. Shooting, fishing, cricket, football, golf and even racing are amongst the outdoor recreations, whereas the opportunities for theatricals, concerts, dancing and even mild flirtations come constantly. The latter perhaps is the most easily obtained of all amusements, as it can be found in every part of the world.

"You dance with one, or you dance with two,
As the notion takes your fancy—
In an Indian glade, with a dusky maid,
Or at home with blue-eyed Nancy."

Perhaps the greatest satisfaction is got out of ship theatricals, as they give so much scope for the talent and energies of so many and, if well got up, afford pleasure to the whole ship's company.

The pieces which are produced on board ship are usually of the musical-comedy type. Occasionally it may be one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas, but more

often the entire play is written by one or two of the officers, as that gives greater opportunities for introducing topical verse. The sailors love these shows and therefore a ship's audience is perhaps the most appreciative in the world.

The most amusing experience I ever had in my life was in connection with a light opera, which was produced by the officers of one of our flagships some years ago in the Mediterranean. After about a month's hard rehearsing it was decided to give the show on shore at the local theatre, which was taken for two performances. As it was impossible to allow all the men of the fleet to land and go to the theatre, a special night was arranged for in a large empty shed near the flagship, which was lying alongside the pier, to which everyone was invited who would be on duty on the two following nights. A splendid temporary stage was rigged up and accommodation for three thousand officers and men was provided. The stage represented the after-part of an old-fashioned man-of-war, with the poop extending across the background, from which a ladder led down on either side to the quarter-deck. The auditorium was filled to overflowing with an enthusiastic audience whose appreciation shook the very rafters with their applause. In front were three or four rows of officers, while behind them, and in the galleries around, were hundreds and hundreds of sailors packed like sardines, but evidently out to enjoy themselves.

The first incident, which created a hurricane of applause, occurred at the end of the first act. The actresses were, of course, all middies, and two of them were singularly beautiful. One of these latter was dressed in a moderately short muslin dress and was

acting the part of a sort of Juliet on the break of the poop, while her Romeo sang to her from the quarter-deck. The duet was well sung and loudly applauded and the lady retired to the back of the poop. As this part of the scenery was only temporarily put together and there was no ladder, she endeavoured to scramble down into the wings; but unfortunately a long nail was sticking out from the plank at the back of the poop, and this catching her dress hooked her up behind and she hung there suspended in mid-air. She had forgotten to put on some very necessary garments.

The audience, who could see clearly under the poop, were convulsed with laughter at the boy's frantic efforts to get down. There he hung for quite three minutes until some of the men behind the scenes went to his rescue.

The sailors were wildly delighted with this part of the performance and yelled for an encore, but owing to the temporary embarrassment of the fair Juliet this could not be granted and the play proceeded. After this the audience was in high humour and the piece went with enthusiasm.

During the second act there was another wild outburst of delight, when the star turn was on the stage alone, doing a song and dance. He was dressed as a buccaneer, with the usual belted jumper and pistol, beneath which he wore a pair of red and white striped pyjama pants and top-boots. He looked the part of a pirate king to perfection. As this performance was only a dress rehearsal, sufficient care had not been taken in some of the minor details of dress, and very soon after the song and dance began a titter broke out in the gallery.

At first it was not understood what this merry laughter was about, but as it grew in volume one naturally looked to see what had occasioned it. It was now quite evident that the cause was on the stage, but the innocent producer of the merriment still continued his verses and danced gaily on, wondering what it could be that had reduced the whole audience to a state of hysterical convulsions.

But the more he danced the louder grew the shrieks of delight of the sailors, until at last he looked to see if anything was wrong with his costume, and with an agonised cry of dismay broke off his song and fled from the stage.

The burst of applause which greeted his exit was simply overwhelming and continued for many minutes. Time after time he was called back, but nothing would induce him to give an encore, so the house had to gradually settle down and content itself with, what was in comparison, a dull ending to what had been a most exciting performance.

I feel certain that the combined efforts of all our leading comedians could not possibly have produced such a flow of spontaneous mirth.

The two performances afterwards at the theatre on shore were a great success. We heard, however, that the two principal ladies nearly came to blows later in the gunroom, because one of them had received more bouquets than the other. So they acted their parts perfectly to the end.

In the early days when Gilbert and Sullivan's operas were all the rage, an ambitious theatrical troupe on board the old *Agincourt* gave a performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore."

The stage was the fore-end of the quarter-deck,

bringing in the mizen mast, bridge and gangway, while the after-end of the quarter-deck was the auditorium. Both had to be almost on the same level, but the seats were on a slope as they are in a cinema theatre, so there was no difficulty in seeing the foot-lights from the back. The break of the poop formed an excellent gallery and was well packed with sailors.

Some weeks of rehearsal were necessary to bring the voices into harmony, and, when this was achieved, it was decided to give the performance when the fleet was at Gibraltar.

At that time H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh commanded the squadron, and he graciously consented to honour us with his presence. A large number of officers in the other ships also came, so we had a full house.

The female performers were mostly midshipmen, but the parts of Josephine and Buttercup were taken respectively by Assistant-Paymaster Woolley and Lieutenant Nicholson. The former had an excellent tenor voice, but the latter was on the gruff side for a lady. The acting of both was perfect.

"Sir Joseph Porter," as if born for the part, was a perfect facsimile of the original, in mannerisms and in appearance, while "Captain Corcoran" was an ideal naval skipper.

The performance went with a swing, the realistic surroundings adding quite a new feature to the play. The First Lord of the Admiralty came on board in the admiral's barge and was received on the quarter-deck in the customary manner with a guard and band. The "sisters and the cousins and the aunts" came alongside in the cutter, while dear little Buttercup arrived in her own bumboat. None of these boats

could actually be seen by the audience ; but they were there, and the orders of the coxswains could easily be heard as they came alongside.

Some of the boys made lovely girls, and it was a pretty sight to see them " gaily tripping " and " lightly skipping " as they came in over the gangway. The little middy too was " a peach " ; his name was Jones. He was five feet nothing in his stockings and carried an enormous telescope which he might easily have got inside.

The play is too well-known to recapitulate here, but it was a great success, and of course the principal ladies were called up to the royal box afterwards and received the usual congratulations.

We were asked to produce it again on our return to England for the benefit of Mr. W. S. Gilbert ; but it was impossible, as so many of our performers had left us and gone to foreign stations.

When I was in the *Bellerophon* on the North American station in 1889 we very often had smoking concerts in which the men were the principal performers. I used to run these shows, and had to be very careful to censor the songs beforehand as some of them were quite impossible.

On one occasion I had vetoed an exceptionally funny song in which the singer appeared with a doll baby in his arms. It began innocently enough, but the temperature rose with each verse until it became so hot that the fire brigade had to be called in. There was a strong protest against my censorship, but I was adamant and refused to alter my decision.

On the night of the entertainment all went well until the performance was nearly completed, when to my horror the man with the baby came on as the

curtain rose for a new turn. He was evidently in league with the orchestra, as they had the music of his song and the first verse was started.

I was sitting in front, and the moment he commenced the chorus I jumped on the stage and seizing him by the scruff of the neck ran him off through the wings, to the intense amusement of the ship's company, who took it as a great joke and applauded vociferously. After that we took jolly fine care that the gentleman did not return.

Sailors are very quaint about their songs. The ultra-sentimental appeals very strongly to the singers who don't think of catering for their audiences. If one judges by the applause, the comic song is the most popular amongst the listeners, but it always seems to me that very few of the men care twopence what the audience think.

Amongst the favourites chosen for a concert, one was certain to find some of these :

The Flag Flew Half-mast High,
The Vacant Chair,
A Flower from Mother's Grave,
When Your Hair Turns Grey,
Baby's Gone to Join the Angels,

and many more in the same bright and cheery strain. I always insisted on every alternate song, at least, being comic, so as to act as an antidote to the remainder.

I confess I dislike heavy sentiment. I like to go to a theatre to be amused, and if I am caused grief and pain by the performance, I think I ought to be able to get some compensation by law. Very often, when I am taken to what is called "a play," I have to

keep my eyes shut during most of the evening. Yet there are people who love to have a good weep. God help them! They'll get lots to weep about one of these days.

There is a hymn which begins "O let us be joyful," and Ella Wheeler Wilcox tells us that, "A man worth while is the one who can smile, when everything goes dead wrong." If we all believed in these sentiments, this world would be a very much happier place than it is.

In the good old days of masts and yards, impromptu concerts were often got up in the evening when the weather was favourable. A few chums would collect together in a quiet spot, near the lee gangway, and a song would be commenced which would probably draw in most of the men who were not in their hammocks. I have often passed quite a happy hour away sitting on a coil of rope near by and enjoying the romantic feeling of my surroundings.

Not a cloud in the sky and the firmament filled with twinkling stars, while the white sails bellied out to the steady trade wind which wafted the good ship onwards on her course. Except for the singing all was still, save for the rush of the water along the lee side as the vessel heeled over easily to the breeze.

No one but a real seaman could appreciate the thrills of such a moment.

The throb of an engine kills romance.

"White wings that never grow weary ;

I'll spread out my white wings, and sail home to thee."

Give me back the white wings, and let me be a sailor once again before I die.

CHAPTER XV

JAPANESE DAYS

ALTHOUGH this chapter may in parts appear somewhat severely critical, it must be remembered that all this is ancient history. As a matter of fact, I am a very great admirer of the Japanese and have many friends among them.

Looking back over a long career, which has given opportunities for visiting nearly all the ports of the world, I can discern, through the mist of fading memories, the outstanding impression that Japan was the most interesting country of all.

In the seventies it was a fairyland of delight to a young midshipman. Everything was so utterly different from what one was accustomed to, while the foreign officer was looked at with curiosity and polite amusement.

Nearly all the Japanese men wore their hair in the old style with top-knots, and double-sworded samurai were still to be seen. It was wonderful how the change went ahead once it started. It began with the hair. Japanese who went abroad very quickly adopted the ordinary European style of cutting the hair; but they still stuck to their native costume when in Japan. Here and there Japanese were to be seen in European dress, but only in the treaty ports.



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Sir Claude MacDonald (British Ambassador).

THE NAVAL COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF (WINSLOE) AND HIS STAFF ON THE EMBASSY STEPS IN TOKIO, 1910.

The first article of European dress which made itself conspicuous amongst the natives in Japan was the billycock hat. It used to be worn with the Japanese kimono and, until one got used to it, looked very comical. The next things to come were elastic-sided boots. It was a good many years before the Japanese ventured beyond this stage. Of course, there were a few students who had been to Europe or America and had acquired a taste for the new civilisation, but the people as a whole moved slowly in modernising their costume.

The Japanese Court ladies were the first to introduce feminine changes, and their attempts were at first most comical. At one of the first state balls given in Tokio, a lady of high rank actually came to the function with her brocade stays on the outside of her bodice. One of our Embassy staff, who used to help the Japanese ladies to dress on these occasions, said that she has often seen stays put on upside down and also wrong side in front.

Later on, when trousers were introduced by the men, it was not an uncommon sight to see them worn buttoned up behind. This all sounds very funny to us, but, as a matter of fact, these mistakes were not worse than those made by Europeans when they put on the Japanese garb.

By the end of last century the intricacies of our costume had been mastered, and you could see as well-dressed women and men in Japan as you could see in any other country. But the Japanese do not really take kindly to any costume but their own. In their homes they usually drop into their kimonos as soon as they get back from their offices, and it is by no means surprising, as it is difficult to find anything

more comfortable for a tired man to put on than one of these loose garments, which are so akin to one of our dressing-gowns.

As an example of how readily the Japanese get out of their official European dress, I might mention here an incident which came under my notice about ten years ago. I was returning to Tokio from one of the naval ports, and in my carriage was a smart young Japanese officer in naval uniform. After about forty minutes on the local branch, we reached the junction on the main line. While we were waiting there for the up-express, my young companion shed all his uniform on the platform, literally stripping to a gantline, and put on his native costume. There were many Japanese passengers about, men and women, but this did not prevent him passing through the stage of absolute nakedness during the evolution.

On one occasion a party of European ladies were walking round the grounds of an attaché's house in Tokio, when they suddenly came upon the gardener having his bath in a round tub. The man was sitting in his furo, just showing his shoulders above the top. All would have been well had he remained seated, but, when the ladies came near him, he at once got up, stood to attention and saluted. The ladies scattered like a flushed covey of partridges.

This reminds me of the story of the tactful plumber who, on opening the unlocked door of a bathroom in a house where he was working, came suddenly upon a lady standing in a bath drying herself. "Excuse me, SIR," said the plumber as he hastily retired. The Japanese gardener was not so tactful.

Travelling in Japan is not yet as agreeable as it might be. One has to put up with a good many

indelicacies, to put it mildly, which jar horribly on our more civilised mentality. The cars are open fore and aft, with no cross seats, and at intervals along the floor are placed spittoons. These receptacles are used for all sorts of purposes, and their condition is often very unpleasant. The somewhat primitive way, too, in which mothers behave with their children is indelicate. One quite understands that it is not easy to educate the poorer classes in social refinement all at once, so we must not be too critical. It is better to avoid looking at these things, then you escape a lot.

I was travelling from Kobe to Yokohama one day with my wife, when seated opposite to us, with his legs crossed like a tailor, was a Japanese gentleman of mature age. His rug was stretched out in the usual way on the cushion, denoting the amount of territory that he owned during the journey. He was in native dress and carried the usual paraphernalia spread about beside him. At one of the stations at which we stopped, he bought a little box containing rice, fish and a pair of chopsticks. He also purchased a small teapot containing native tea, and a cup. These articles he placed on the seat beside him and prepared thoroughly to enjoy himself.

Feeling that this operation was not one that I was anxious to be a witness of, I withdrew behind my newspaper, and the rest of the story is my wife's, who very generously, though I am bound to confess much to my horror, kept me posted as to all the harrowing details of the tragedy which unrolled itself before her on the opposite seat. Protests on my part were unavailing, as she said she was determined that I should not lose any of the details of such an amusing incident.

Having arranged everything to his liking, the Japanese gentleman opened a little silk bag, and taking from it a small plain wooden box he proceeded to unpack it. Within this box was a quantity of cotton wool, inside of which was a small yellow bundle. This was very carefully removed and untied, when surrounded by more cotton wool there appeared a complete set of false teeth. These our friend carefully wiped with a silk handkerchief and then placed them in his mouth.

With a grunt of satisfaction, only possible to a native of Nippon, he then lifted up his box of rice and, by the aid of his chopsticks, shovelled it into his mouth. Having disposed of half his ration, he readjusted his dental substitutes, gave one more grunt of satisfaction and set to on the remainder of his repast. This completed, the empty rice box and chopsticks were thrown out of the window and a portion of the tea was drunk. Then followed a series of chords denoting intense satisfaction, after which the set of teeth were removed from the mouth and placed in the teapot, where they were thoroughly washed. The silk handkerchief was again requisitioned and they were most carefully dried and replaced in the yellow cloth and packed in cotton wool. Finally they disappeared inside the wooden box, which was replaced in the silk bag, and the teapot followed the empty rice box out of the window. The whole proceeding occupied exactly twenty-seven and a half minutes, and I believe my wife was quite sorry when it ended. If it had lasted the full half-hour, I know I should have died.

I remember the first train which ran in Japan with British guard, engineer and stoker. For some years,

after the Japanese officials took over, you heard the native guard call out "Right away" as he blew his whistle and held out his arm as the signal for the train to move on. It was the same with the ships. I have heard a Japanese captain give the order "Hands by the topsail halliards" in good English to his Japanese crew as he sailed his corvette into Yokohama Harbour.

When the Japanese officers took over their first steamer, they were determined to run her on the trial trip without any European assistance. They started off all right and went down Yeddo Bay in great style for a couple of hours' run. On their return to harbour they couldn't stop the engines, so they had to steam round and round in a circle until they stopped of themselves from lack of steam.

I remember a story my father told me about the very early days in Japan. A number of natives had come off to see the ship, and were allowed to walk about and look at everything. In the course of the afternoon a man was seen sitting on the quarter-deck, evidently suffering terribly, as he appeared to be in great pain. On close examination it was found that he was trying to draw one of the ringbolts out of the deck.

In Japan a robber is called a dorobo, and there are just as many of these gentlemen about there as one would find anywhere else. The burglar, also called dorobo, is a pretty wily customer. He used to conduct his professional activities naked, with his body covered with oil, so that it was exceedingly difficult to collar him. One of these ruffians very nearly got into my house at Shinagawa one night. He had cut away one of the window panes of a glassed-in veranda

when my plucky little wife jumped out of bed and flashed an electric torch at him. The dorobo bolted.

After that we took sundry precautions to protect ourselves, one of which was to make the watchman sit in the hall at night. This he did with a huge two-handed sword in his hands, but he would insist on singing, which was more than we could put up with, so the idea had to be discontinued. When expostulated with as to the singing, he asked us what was the use of his being there if he didn't let us know that he was awake.

As a rule these watchmen walk round the outsides of the houses, cracking two bits of wood together, but the dorobo occasionally makes things very unpleasant by attacking the watchman before attempting to enter the house, so the job of night watchman isn't a popular one. The best safeguard is a good chow dog, as he gives the alarm at once, and puts the fear of death into the dorobo.

The Japanese officials are great sticklers for etiquette. They are wonderfully precise as to details, and when they give any sort of reception or entertainment, they do things really well. I don't think any country does it better. They have a charming way of always providing some little souvenir for each guest, which adds additional enjoyment to the festivity. It may be in the shape of a little lacquered bonbon box, a very artistic menu or a small silver box or vase, but, whatever it may be, it is sure to be in exquisite taste and something that will last for years to remind you of their generous hospitality.

At an Imperial banquet, where the officials are called up before the Emperor to drink his health in Saki, the little cup is always given to each guest to keep as a memento of the occasion. All these little



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General Rawlinson.

Mayor of Tokio.

Lord Kitchener.

KITCHENER AND THE GEISHAS.
Lord Kitchener and General Rawlinson at a Maple Club Dinner, 1909.

attentions are greatly appreciated and make the entertainments so much more attractive.

One of our distinguished Ambassadors, Sir Claud MacDonald, was invited to a large banquet in Tokio where the dress was evening clothes, not uniform as is customary. He was not certain as to whether he ought to wear his orders or not. Knowing how particular the Japanese were about these matters, he decided to wear them. Arriving a few minutes late, he found the room full of Japanese officials, but none of them wore any decorations.

Taking advantage of the first opportunity he slipped out of the room, and, quickly taking off all his stars, dropped them into the pocket of his overcoat in the cloak-room. On his return to the reception hall he found that, during his absence from the room, every one of the Japanese officials had put on his stars and medals. There was a momentary silence of astonishment on all sides, when the humour of the situation appealed to everyone, and there was a good hearty laugh over the incident.

One very wet night a big dinner was being given at the Embassy, and the Ambassador noticed that one of his Japanese guests was wet to the skin. Being much concerned, His Excellency pressed for an explanation, and found out that his little friend had arrived in a jinrikisha much too early, having made the mistake of half an hour in the time for dinner. He refused to go into the house till the proper time, and spent the surplus twenty-five minutes standing under a tree in the garden, with the rain pouring down in buckets. The Ambassador sent his moist guest into a warm room and had him thoroughly dried, after which the evening went merrily.

There are two great occasions in Tokio when the Emperor gives official garden parties, to which all the Embassies and distinguished visitors are invited. These take place in the spring and autumn to celebrate the full bloom of the cherry blossoms and the chrysanthemums. Presentations are made to the Empress by the respective ambassadors' wives. On one occasion, when the wife of the British Ambassador was making her presentations in the Royal tent, an American tourist, who had no right to be there at all, pushed herself up close to the Royal circle and said, "Say, here, present me to the Empress." It was quite impossible to argue with an American in the presence of Royalty, so the introduction was made.

Afterwards, while the guests were seated, having refreshments at small tables in the garden, the dignified wife of the British Ambassador went up to the female from Chicago and asked her what she meant by forcing herself into the Royal presence without proper authority.

"Wal, I don't see what's wrong anyway," was the reply; "if I want to be introduced to the Empress, why shouldn't I be?"

Seeing the hopelessness of prolonging the discussion the Ambassador's wife withdrew.

Then one of the Embassy staff, rather a wag, approached the offender and said:

"You are a very bad woman to behave like that!" The reply was sardonic.

"Say, here, who was that angry old woman who spoke to me just now?"

"That was the wife of the British Ambassador," replied the attaché.

"Gee whizz! You don't say," was all the American

could answer as she buried herself in her mayonnaise.

The climate in Japan is not altogether a pleasant one. July and August are damp, hot months, when life at the seaports is almost unbearable. The cold during December, January, February, and March is accentuated by the draughtiness of the houses. It is quite a common thing to see the curtains blown out into the room, or the carpet almost lifted from the floor by the wind passing through the chinks between the boards. The fireplaces are poor and hibatchis don't improve matters much.

During my three years' sojourn at Tokio, the only member of my family who was ever warm in the winter time was my eldest boy, who sat down, by mistake of course, on one of these open charcoal stoves. Fortunately, I was at hand and he escaped with the loss of the seat of his breeches. But the remaining months are really charming. April and May in the spring and October and November in the autumn are truly delightful.

Earthquakes and floods are common in Japan. The former are very frequent. They don't, as a rule, do very much harm, but they are there all the time and have sometimes been very severe. Nevertheless the constant small earthquakes are decidedly unpleasant and very alarming when they occur in the dead of night. Sometimes a few weeks will pass without even a rumble, while at other times you will get shocks as often as twice a week. It is always best to sleep with your dressing-gown and slippers ready at the foot of your bed, so that you can make a bolt for it if necessary.

The floods are more damaging than the earthquakes. They occur during the summer and at intervals of a

few years ; but when you do get one the damage in loss of life and property is terrible.

In 1910 there was a very severe flood, which wrecked a portion of Tokio and caused many casualties. The damage was not confined to the capital, the whole of the central province suffering great loss in places where the rivers overflowed and the villages were flooded.

During the summer the European colony migrates up into the mountains, thus avoiding the great heat of the seaports. The favourite resort of the diplomats was Chusenji, whilst the business people from Yokohama favoured Nikko, Hakone and Kamakura. The missionaries generally went to Karuisawa, a pretty spot about eighty miles north-west of Tokio.

Being somewhat weary of an endless round of official dinners, we elected to cut adrift for the summer and lead a simple life. Several other people adopted a like course, including the Councillor of our Embassy and his wife, now Sir Horace and Lady Rumbold, both charming people.

The journey to Karuisawa is interesting, the train from Tokio wending its way over the flat plains towards the hills and then mounting a steep gradient to the plateau above. There are about twenty-six tunnels and bridges connecting them in this ascent. The last of these brings one to within two miles of Karuisawa, where the air is at once delicious and refreshing.

Karuisawa itself is situated in the centre of a small piece of flat country surrounded by the tops of the mountains, and is about five thousand feet above the level of the sea. Bungalows of various sizes, built to suit the requirements of summer visitors, are scattered about the plain. One hotel stood near the

station and another was situated about a mile away at the foot of the hills where three ravines meet.

We chose the latter for our residence owing to the charm of its surroundings. It was a heterogeneous sort of building, the central portion being built on stone, while the wings and attachments were all in Japanese style. Behind the hotel three streams met and formed a nice little brook, which passed about fifty yards from the hotel, winding its tortuous way through the garden in front and then flowing on towards the town.

About five miles off, on the side remote from the town, there was a volcano, Asama by name, which on our arrival showed no signs of activity. In 1783 there had been a very serious eruption, which buried the neighbourhood in ashes to a depth of fifteen feet, causing great loss of life. Consequently the ground was all scorïæ.

Our family party being a large one, we had taken a wing of the hotel consisting of five rooms. Our sitting-room, looking out towards the stream, was at the end of a corridor and our principal bedroom was just behind it.

We arrived at Karuisawa early in June, and for about six weeks the weather was delightful, and we spent a happy and peaceful time taking walks and enjoying the beautiful scenery. Towards the end of July, however, the rain began to come down in torrents, and so there was nothing for us to do but amuse ourselves indoors.

Gradually we saw our little stream growing into a river, but there was no alarm until about the 9th of August, when a torrent was pouring down from the hills. During the afternoon of the 10th, we sat at

our window and watched huge trees which had been torn up by the roots rushing madly past us. The bank of the river was then about ten yards off us, for it had been raining unceasingly for a fortnight.

At five o'clock that evening I went out to inspect, and found that the water had to rise nine feet before it touched our hotel. So I went back reassured and in due course we all went to bed at about ten o'clock.

My wife awoke me soon after eleven saying that the Japanese were evacuating the rooms beneath us. This was rather alarming, and we both dressed and began packing our things.

About ten minutes later there was a terrifying report, like a great explosion, and we had to pick up our children and bolt into the main building. Some Japanese houses just above the hotel had been completely washed away.

As soon as our children were in safety, my wife and I returned to our corridor and hauled our boxes into the main building. We had just finished this work when there was another loud report caused by a huge landslide on the opposite side of the river, which caused a vast volume of water to flow in the direction of the hotel, and the wing that we had just left collapsed. We were all collected in the front hall when this happened, and the manager came to us and told us we must clear out, as the building was not safe. It was a pitiful position. Outside the rain was still coming down heavily, and in the inky darkness we had nowhere to go except up the mountain-side.

We were loath to take our little baby out into the storm, so we hung on as long as we could on the steps of the hotel. At last, there was a faint glimmer in



CARRYING THE NURSE TO SAFETY.



HER LUGGAGE FOLLOWS.

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the sky, which looked uncommonly like a change for the better. Half an hour later the rain had stopped and the sky was bright with stars, so we wandered off up the mountain-side in search of some shanty in which we could put our children.

Our baby was strapped in his mailcart, and up the mountain path we slowly picked our way until we found a small shed, into which the party all scrambled. It was then one o'clock, and by the help of a torch I went round to inspect the neighbourhood. Finding that half the hut was hanging over a deep ditch, I went back pretty quick, and got our family out of that. We found another shed a little further on, which was quite safe, and there they all stopped till daylight.

Soon after four o'clock, with the early streaks of dawn, my wife and I went down to see what damage had been done, and we found the water had receded a little and we were able to walk about in safety.

It was difficult to recognise where we had been living for the past two months; for two of our rooms had entirely disappeared. The remainder had collapsed on top of the lower floor, which was buried in the scoriæ. Our bed which we had only vacated a few hours before, was hanging from the wreckage over the water, and all around was a chaos of broken timber.

All about the hotel were the remains of numerous Japanese houses, which had all been washed away from their foundations, and the ground was strewn with the quaintest collection of broken furniture and clothing.

It was indeed a sorry sight.

We saw the unhappy Japanese proprietor seated on an empty case, gazing with tearful eyes on the scene

of desolation, which involved for him a loss of many thousand dollars.

A sort of scratch breakfast of tea and sandwiches was arranged for us at six o'clock, and after that I started off for the Rumbolds' house to ask them to shelter our children until we could make other arrangements. I had to wade a great deal of the way, as streams were pouring down from the mountain, cutting off our hotel entirely. The Rumbolds were most kind and sympathetic and said they would be delighted to help us, so I went back in a happier frame of mind.

Of course the kiddies had to be carried across the stream, as well as the nurse and governess, so I spent most of the forenoon going backwards and forwards through the water. I had to carry the nurse on my back, but the governess, who was not so heavy, was carried in my arms. I was glad when I got them all safely on dry land.

When I got back to the hotel I found that my wife had managed to secure a couple of rooms in the main building, and there was a possibility of getting further accommodation the following day, as several of the visitors refused to stay in the hotel any longer. As a matter of fact, the place was perfectly safe now that the rain had stopped, and the river had begun to fall.

Our only trouble was the danger of running short of food. For the moment we had enough, but as the railway bridges were destroyed on all sides, we did not know whether it would be possible to get any supplies into Karuisawa from whence we drew all our provisions. This apprehension lasted for some days, until a temporary bridge was built, which allowed stores to come in from the north.

The morning following the disaster was my wife's



THE MIKASA HOTEL AFTER THE FLOOD.

birthday, and in the early hours, when we were at the height of our distress, the children came with their presents and wished their mother "Many happy returns of the day." One little girl was in tears because she had lost her small contribution in the flood. It was a pathetic little picture and brought the tears to her mother's eyes.

But we were not yet out of the wood.

On the 12th I went over and retrieved my family from the Rumbolds. The weather was quite fine and everything looked hopeful ; but during the night the rain came on again, and the river began to rise. That evening we all made our beds in the billiard-room, as we were not taking any more risks, and this building was on the side next to the hill and could easily be got out of.

What a night that was ! I shall never forget it. About one a.m. it was blowing and raining very hard, and one of the billiard-room windows blew in with a crash. We all thought the end of the world had come. The whole party jumped to their feet in alarm, but we subsided again as soon as the trouble was located.

My wife, who has a strong sense of humour, saw one or two incidents during the night which amused her. I was slumbering, so I missed the fun. The wife of a South American minister was seen sewing her diamonds into a pair of yellow knickers she was wearing, while her husband spent his time catching small animals like the monkeys do in the Zoo. These small insects had come from the futons on which he was lying.

The next morning it really did clear up, but Asama began to pour forth smoke and flame, which was evidently caused by the large amount of water which

had poured into the crater. This was very alarming, but as the days went on it got no worse.

Many people had left the hotel, and some got away by the northern railway; but it took them two or three days to reach Tokio by this roundabout route. Such a journey was impossible for me with my children.

At last the welcome news came that the railway to the south was possible, and, just a month after the flood, we left Karuisawa.

We got on all right for food. We noticed that a grey horse, which had driven us from the station, was not there when we went away, so we concluded we must have eaten it, as meat was very difficult to get.

Japan is a charming country, but it has this drawback: you never know what awful catastrophe will happen. It may be a bad earthquake, it may be a flood, or it may be a great fire. Whichever happens, thousands of people are sure to be killed. It is not a safe place to live in for any time.

CHAPTER XVI

JAPANESE ADMIRALS AND THE AMERICAN NAVY

THE outstanding figure in the Japanese Navy is, and has been ever since the Russo-Japanese War, Admiral Togo, who destroyed the Russian Fleet at the Battle of Tsushima.

The other admirals who served with distinction during that war are Kamamura, who commanded the Cruiser Squadron, Admiral Ijuin, who fired the first shot of the war at Chimulpo and Shimamura, Kato and Yamomoto, who was Chief of the General Staff. All of these men were very gallant naval officers and did great work for their country.

Admiral Togo was perhaps the most modest and unassuming hero I have ever met. He had a kind heart and a perfectly charming personality. Unfortunately he did not speak English very well, although he had been educated in England, so it was difficult to get a thorough understanding of his character, but it was not difficult to notice that he was a man of high principles who was greatly loved and respected by his countrymen.

Once, when Admiral Togo dined with me in Tokio, I asked him to write a few words for me in Japanese that I could frame and hang up in my home, which would be a guide to my boys through life. The words he wrote were these: "The utmost truth." That

describes the man better than any eulogy from me would do.

When Admiral Togo came over to the Coronation in 1911 he stayed at 37, Belgrave Square (Seaford House) with Prince Hagashi Fushimi, to whom the house was lent for the week's festivities. About this time his portrait was painted by Lazlo. When the picture was finished I went with the admiral to see it, and I remember saying to the artist, "I think the face is rather too severe. It is the kindness of his expression which is his strongest feature." I was told that the expression in the portrait embodied great strength of character, which was essential in so illustrious a hero. However, I was informed later that the admiral's wife didn't like it at all, and I wasn't surprised. It was an excellent likeness for all that.

When the Coronation celebrations were over I took the gallant admiral for a trip to Scotland and he stayed with my brother-in-law at Ravenswood, a charming Scottish home on the Tweed near Melrose. From there we motored into Edinburgh and saw the sights of that beautiful city.

One day while crossing the Lammermuir hills in the motor driven by Scott, an old Wimbledon rifle-shot, we had quite an exciting experience. During the afternoon we knocked over three sheep, a pony and cart, two chickens and a wheelbarrow. Scott was a motor-car proprietor and had taken over the job of chauffeur for the day in honour of our distinguished visitor. He drove at a great pace, and after we had had our third accident the heroic admiral asked me if this was the pace at which we always drove in Scotland. I told him that out of considera-

tion for him we were driving most carefully and at a very low speed, but it was really safer to travel much faster, as the transatlantic captains found when they crossed the Newfoundland banks in a fog. He said he felt much safer at the battle of Tshushima.

When we left Ravenswood we motored to the Trossachs, and a most amusing incident happened on our arrival there. We telegraphed through ordering rooms, so that when our cars drew up at the hotel we were cordially greeted by the proprietress, and at once shown our quarters for the night.

The admiral was given the best room in the hotel at the end of a corridor, mine was next to his, and then came the members of the Japanese staff. Soon after I had gone into my room I heard a great altercation going on next door. Listening, I heard the admiral's voice raised in angry tones; so I went outside into the corridor to see what was wrong.

Peeping through the half-open door of the admiral's room I saw the dejected flag-lieutenant standing before his chief, who was laying off at him in tones of unmistakable wrath. As soon as the flag-lieutenant looked in my direction I beckoned to him and he came to the door, when I asked him what was the matter.

"Admiral very angry," he said. "He says his room very bad."

I went in to see what was wrong, but couldn't detect a flaw. All at once a thought flashed through my mind which enlightened me, and I asked the admiral to look at my room and see if he liked it any better. Giving a grunt of satisfaction he asked if the rooms might be changed.

As our things were not yet unpacked this was the work of a few moments and everything settled down happily. A few minutes later I sauntered over to the flag-lieutenant's room and asked him what had disturbed the admiral so much. He evidently thought that the admiral was justified in his displeasure, as he repeated again that it was a very bad room. "Why?" I enquired. "Admiral not like two beds," he replied. "Why?" I repeated. "He afraid," and he proceeded to explain to me the custom of his own country. This was too much for me, though I had suspected it, and I burst out laughing so heartily that my Japanese friend had to join me and treat the matter as the good joke it really was. The best of it was that in my room there was a large double bed, whereas the admiral had two single ones in his, where he would have had the chance of some privacy which would have been denied him in mine. I may remark here that in Admiral Togo's younger days it was quite the thing in Japan to interpret hospitality more generously than is common with us Westerners. The Japanese of those days were delightfully naïve.

The best looking of the Japanese admirals was Kamamura. He was a fine-looking man with a handsome face and more impressive in appearance than any of the others. He was considerably above the average height of the Japanese man. He had bad luck in the war, but was certainly a splendid admiral for all that.

Ijuin was unquestionably the easiest admiral to understand. He had been a lot in America and spoke English perfectly. He, too, was a splendid fellow and distinguished himself during the war with Russia. I

have often enjoyed a quiet chat with him and his charming wife at their delightful country residence near Shinagawa.

It is difficult to differentiate amongst these Japanese admirals when all did so well. I found them all charming and genuinely true. To a man they loved the British Navy and made it their model. My sojourn among them was the happiest experience of my naval life. I made numerous friends among the Japanese naval officers, and although it is ten years since I left Japan I frequently correspond with some of them now.

I will never forget the courtesy and kindness I received at the Japanese Admiralty from Admiral Baron Saite and all the officers of his staff. They simply couldn't do enough for me and my work was made very easy. I was very loyal to the Alliance, and I think they liked me for that. Never once during my stay in Japan did I give anything away to the other foreign naval attachés, though I was approached over and over again.

They were all good fellows, however, and understood the delicacy of my position, so they didn't show me any signs of resentment.

When I first went to China in the seventies there were some funny old junks out there flying the United States flag. The flagship was the *Hartford*, a wooden frigate carrying smooth-bores. Veterans of the Civil War of America will remember her well. The *Kearsage*, which sunk the *Alabama* off Cherbourg, was also on the station. Then we had the *Monocacy* and *Ashuelot*, two double-ender paddle vessels and the *Palos*. These last three were very old vessels—indeed it was said that the *Palos* had been so long on the

China seas that it was quite unnecessary to navigate her as she knew her way about so well. Previously to going to the East she had been at Boston when the *Mayflower* arrived from Plymouth, and she had fired a salute of 101 guns when the Pilgrims landed.

We heard these yarns from the American midshipmen on the station, so we believed them to be true. When the *Hartford* went home, the Navy Department at Washington sent out the weirdest old tub I have ever seen, called the *Monongohela*. In outward appearance she resembled the Ark, but had three masts and a funnel, the latter stuck in the middle of the quarter-deck well aft. Her full speed was seven knots. She carried smooth-bores like her predecessor.

One used to wonder what use the American Government thought these ships could possibly be in case of war. I used to feel quite sorry for their officers, who were absolutely ashamed of their antiquity. Notwithstanding their age though, those that were fully rigged used to be very smart aloft and were not easily beaten in sending up or down their upper yards, an evolution that they generally contrived to carry out at the same moment as we did.

Our sailors were always pretty good friends with the men of the American Navy. Naturally enough there were occasionally brawls in the drinking saloons between them, but so there were between the ships' companies of rival British ships. There was nothing in that. Amongst the officers of the two navies I have never in my life known any other condition but one of pronounced friendship. Salt water seems to straighten out men's minds and make them see the best side of everything. The word "subtlety" is not understood in either wardrooms or gunrooms.

All these young officers trust each other and readily become friends in both navies.

I have no doubt that we often amuse the Americans as much as they amuse us. Some of their sayings appear quaint, but no doubt we say things too which make us look ridiculous in their eyes. We mustn't, either of us, take these things too seriously.

In 1895 I was present at the opening of the Kiel Canal. All the Great Powers sent squadrons to represent them, and the United States sent two "up-to-date" cruisers. During the week we all lay in Kiel Harbour, the German Emperor was very fond of cruising around in an eight-oared galley, which he steered himself, and he frequently called alongside a foreign man-of-war without giving any warning whatever. On one occasion he ran alongside one of the American ships and was up the gangway and on the quarter-deck before he was observed. It just happened that the captain was having a short "stretch off the land" after lunch; but he was quickly on deck and made his apologies to the Emperor.

A tour round the ship followed, in which His Imperial Majesty showed great interest. As the Emperor left the quarter-deck on his departure he thanked the captain cordially, and was turning to go down the accommodation ladder into his boat when the American skipper said, "Say, Emperor, next time you come on board my ship, I hope you'll give me time to button up my trousers." Prince Henry gave this story away to the British Fleet.

Among the many festivities which took place, a grand ball was given at the Schloss. It was a magnificent affair at which the Kings and Queens of Germany were present with their suites. I have never seen

such a splendid sight as the arrival of the Emperor and Empress in the Grand Hall, where all the minor Royalties were assembled to receive them. The Emperor looked magnificent in his white and gold uniform. A French officer near me remarked, "If we only had a man like that in France." I confess I was full of admiration for the man too.

Soon after this wonderful tableau the ball was in full swing. It was a hot and thirsty night and a group of American naval officers were standing together watching the dancers when one of them, a captain, tried vainly to get a cooling drink. Just then the American admiral appeared and seeing his captain's predicament sung out loudly to him so that many of us heard it, "Say, captain, if you want that whisky and soda you had better say you are descended from one of the crowned heads of New York City."

While I am telling stories about Americans, I cannot resist repeating one that was told me by the late Sir Claud MacDonald, formerly British Ambassador in Japan. At a big dinner party in London some years ago a lady of distinction sat next the American Ambassador. Being desirous of extracting words of wisdom from His Excellency, she said :

"What do you think, Mr. —, is the most beautiful thing in life?"

The prompt but unexpected reply was : "The most beautiful thing in life is certainly a charming lady like yourself."

"Your Excellency flatters me," said the questioner ; "but I fear I cannot agree with your answer."

Then said the Ambassador : "And pray what do you think is the most beautiful thing in life?"

"I think sleep is," she answered.

“ Well, yes, I agree,” said His Excellency, “ next to the lady.”

There is rather a good story told about the late Secretary of the Navy in Washington. Mr. Daniels being of a socialistic turn of mind, thought he would introduce a big social reform into the American Naval Service, so he drafted an order decreeing that there should be only one mess on board each man-of-war, and that all the officers and men should belong to it and mess together.

It was a great idea, but unfortunately the ship had not yet been built which could provide the accommodation required for one large mess capable of seating a whole ship's company. Undeterred, however, by such a trivial difficulty, Mr. Daniels was proceeding with his scheme when someone suggested to him that when he dined on board one of the battle-ships he might have to sit next to a nigger. That finished it. The order was never issued.

When I was the British Naval Attaché in Japan, I received orders from home to visit and report on the defences of the Philippines. On my arrival there I received every possible sort of hospitality and was invited to stay at Government House with Governor Smith and his wife. Notwithstanding this, the military authorities looked upon me with grave suspicion because I came from Japan, with whom we then had an alliance. As a matter of fact, too, the Americans were just scared to death of the Japanese. I don't know whether they thought the Japanese would eat them ; but it was evident from the articles in the Californian press that they had the wind up properly. I often had a quiet laugh with the Japanese admirals about it.

The United States with their huge resources and practically the whole world behind them had nothing to fear from the Island Empire of the East, which was five thousand miles away. It was too absurd. What had Japan to gain by going to war with America? Absolutely nothing. As to our alliance with Japan, it was a safeguard for America, not a menace.

Finding I could get nothing in the way of information out of the military officials at Manila, nor would they allow me to visit the island at the mouth of the bay where the principal fortifications were, I set to work in another direction and returned to Tokio with my pockets full of plans showing the details and position of every gun in the island. The description of Corrigidor Island had been obtained by a civilian who landed from a small boat in the early morning and, finding all the sentries asleep, had no difficulty whatever in sketching every gun-position there was. As a matter of fact the guns were mostly obsolete. Like our Hong-Kong defences their strength was very much over-estimated.

When Admiral Sperry brought his fleet to Yokohama, the Japanese went crazy in their desire to do honour to their visitors. The reception when the Admiral first landed and drove through the streets was great. I regretted that I very nearly upset the whole show. The fleet arrived in the roads at 9 a.m., and I went down to Yokohama by train from Tokio during the forenoon and went off to call on Admiral Sperry at about eleven o'clock.

When my visit was over I went up on the Bluff to some friends of mine with whom my wife was lunching, and afterwards they lent us a very smart victoria and pair to take us to the station. It just happened that

our route took us along the Bund past the English hatoba, where by a curious coincidence Admiral Sperry was about to land at the very moment that we turned the corner to go up towards the station. The streets were packed with people, with the children in front armed with miniature Japanese and American flags, which they were waiting to throw into the carriage of the American admiral.

Flags and banners waved everywhere, while coloured paper festoons and paper lanterns added to the cheery scene. I was in uniform, with my cocked hat and epaulettes on, and as we swung round past the hatoba at a smart trot I was immediately mistaken for the American admiral and loud shouts of banzai and hearty cheers met us on either side. Soon the crowd closed in on the carriage, and flowers and flags were thrown into the victoria in great profusion.

My wife was tickled to death and enjoyed it thoroughly, but feeling the fraudulent position I was in, I became greatly embarrassed and told the betto to drive down the first side street he could find and get out of it. This was no easy matter, as the crowd was so great, and we had to go on being fêted for quite ten minutes before it was possible to leave the main street.

However, we eventually got clear of the people and drove on to the station, where we were able to seek refuge in one of the railway carriages.

Whether the Japanese really like the Americans I never quite understood. They respect them as a nation certainly, and they get a lot of money out of them when the Americans visit the Island Empire of the Far East, but I am inclined to think that their friendship does not extend much further than that.

Japan being a great naval power, there were, of course, a good many foreign naval attachés in Tokio. Curiously, the one I liked best of these was Captain Lange, of the Imperial German Navy. He was quite a good fellow, and was very popular in Tokio. He commanded the battleship *Posen* during the war, and was, I think, present at the Battle of Jutland.

After I came home from Japan in 1911, I wrote to him two or three times, but got no reply till 1914, when some of our ships visited Kiel, previous to the outbreak of the war. I then got a letter from one of our captains enclosing a post-card which Lange had written in his cabin.

It was just a few lines saying he was well and thanking me for my letters, but it showed very clearly that he had been afraid to write to me openly and that he must have known that the war was coming along.

Another of our attachés was a Scandinavian. He too was a very nice fellow and afterwards came to this country and stayed at my house in Kent. He was then on the eve of being appointed naval attaché in London. On the outbreak of war he wrote to my wife abusing Great Britain for having taken sides against Germany and showed clearly on which side his sympathies were. My wife did not answer this letter, but I did, and pointed out that the war was a far more serious business than he appeared to think. I told him that by expressing the views he had written to my wife he was distinctly an enemy of my King and country. Therefore I could not ask him to my house again unless he changed his opinions.

Shortly after this he wrote again to my wife in the



Admiral Sir Hedworth Lambton.

Prince and Princess Fushimi.

Lady McDonald.

Admiral Togo.

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS ON BOARD THE BRITISH FLAGSHIP, 1908.

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same strain, saying that we could do nothing against Germany, that we had no troops and that we had backed the wrong horse. I replied, saying that before another year was over our army would be as powerful as that of France and that Germany would certainly be defeated. I added that as he continued to be anti-British I hoped he would not write to my wife again.

Now this was in the autumn of 1914, when he was actually naval attaché at the Court of St. James's. Knowing what his country's tendency was and how they hated Russia, and having heard this gentleman's views on many occasions, I thought that he was not a right and proper person to be in London at that time, so I wrote to the Director of Naval Intelligence and told him of my experiences. Two years later I took up a *Whitaker's Almanack* and found that our friend was still at his post.

It seemed incomprehensible that after my warning he should have been allowed to remain on. I do not say that he was a dishonourable man ; but, if he did his duty, he reported to his own Government every bit of naval information that he could get hold of. This was a source of great danger to us, for his country was full of spies. I was very sorry to lose a friend, but patriotism is our first duty. The man who fails in patriotism is a traitor.

When I returned from Japan in 1911 we had on board our mail steamer, the *Kamo Maru*, among our passengers, the Austrian military attaché, a Captain Dané. This officer was very outspoken about Austrian foreign politics. He assured me that the Austrians hated Great Britain, especially the army, which would welcome a war with France and Britain more than

anything else. He was quite confident of the result and regarded the issue as inevitable.

As far back as 1909 I remember travelling in the train from Yokosuka to Tokio with Admiral Yamamoto, who had just returned from a trip to Germany. He told me then that he was certain that the Germans intended to go to war with Great Britain. He had seen a great deal of their naval activities, and they all pointed towards a desire for sea supremacy, which could not be obtained without defeating the British Navy. The Japanese admiral was of opinion that the war would come very soon, probably within three or four years, and though he didn't actually say so, it was quite evident that he thought we would have a mighty tough problem to tackle.

Few people realised then the value of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The Japanese could not stand alone. They would have had to seek an alliance somewhere, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that they would have allied themselves to Germany if they had not made their treaty with us. If the Japanese had been on the other side during the Great War, it would be difficult to say what would have happened.

We would have lost our control of the Eastern sea, and consequently all our island possessions there would have gone. We might have lost India and the Malay Peninsula, while Australia and New Zealand would have had great difficulty in defending themselves and could have sent no troops oversea.

If we had lost the war, which would have been quite possible under those circumstances, our empire would have been rent asunder and Greater Britain would have ceased to exist. Those who question the

wisdom of renewing the treaty with Japan should remember that our Eastern possessions would certainly be lost if we had to fight another combination which included the land of the rising sun.

It is certainly in the interest of Australia and New Zealand that this treaty should be renewed.

CHAPTER XVII

CURIOUS INCIDENTS AT SEA

I WAS on my way out to the West Indies by mail steamer many years ago when a most extraordinary incident occurred. We had a nice lot of passengers on board and the weather was fine, so we quite enjoyed ourselves. There were several charming girls to dance with and the time passed pleasantly enough.

Amongst others we noticed a very pretty English girl of about eighteen, who was in charge of a priest. She was very quiet and didn't mix at all at first with the other passengers, but my cabin mate, a young Demerara boy, was rather attracted by her, and, when the priest's back was turned, found opportunities for paying her a little attention. The girl responded readily enough and very soon her story came out.

She was a ward in Chancery and had been in an English convent, from which she was being taken out to Jamaica by the priest to marry a nigger. My cabin mate gave the whole story to me and asked my advice as to what he ought to do.

Now we happened to have the wife of a high Government official on board, Mrs. Robinson, with whom I was on friendly terms, and I consulted her.

Meanwhile the attentions of the Demerara boy were

being resented by the priest, and the poor girl became very unhappy. Mrs. Robinson then took her up, and heard all the details of what was a diabolical plot to get the girl's money by marrying her to a black man in Jamaica. The girl had never seen this man, and was too unsophisticated to realise the dreadful future which was being mapped out for her. She had been in a convent all her life and knew nothing of the world, so her innocence was not to be wondered at.

As soon as the story leaked out, the lady passengers very quickly got hold of her, and soon the whole ship was in a state of great excitement over the case.

Our first port of call was Barbados, and immediately we anchored there the priest went ashore to fetch the bridegroom, who had come from Jamaica specially to meet his fiancée.

But events were moving quickly in other directions. The high Government official came off to meet his wife and daughter, who were passengers on board, and he was immediately told all about the young lady.

With commendable promptitude he sent for the chief of the police, and placed the girl in his care. She was at once taken ashore and comfortably housed. When the priest returned with the intended bridegroom his bird had flown, and there was a terrible row. But he got no sympathy from anyone on board, and left us, never to be seen again.

The girl was sent home by the next steamer to kind friends who volunteered to look after her, but what happened to the two villains of the plot we never heard.

On one occasion my ship passed through the English

Narrows in order to avoid the rough passage outside the islands, just north of the Straits of Magellan. Only light-draft vessels could take this canal-like route, as it was very narrow and badly charted. It took us two days to get through and of course we had to anchor at night. In many places the channel was only a few hundred yards wide, with pine-trees on either side and no sign of life anywhere. The silence of the virgin forests was only broken by the wash under our bows and by the throb of our engines as we steamed steadily along through the still waters.

On the forenoon of our second day we sighted a vessel coming towards us. By the squareness of her yards we made her out to be a man-of-war. We could see she was not British from a long way off, but it was not until we were less than a mile apart that we made out that she was French, and that she had a commercial signal flying.

Now it happened that our signal flags were all in the sailroom, under the spare foretopsail, and I was very disinclined to clear the place in order to get them out. Accordingly I went to the captain and asked him what had better be done about it. He said that he didn't want to give the men a lot of trouble in clearing the sailroom, so we had better take no notice of the signal, which advice I carried out.

Along came the French gunboat, and as she got near us it became evident that she wanted to communicate. Our captain then gave the order to stop the engines, and soon afterwards the French ship lowered a boat and sent an officer to board us. He was received with all the usual ceremony, and he walked aft along the quarter-deck with the skipper.

We very soon noticed that our gallant captain was

not making much headway with the foreigner, and he called me to come and see if I could find out what the French officer wanted. Immediately I appeared a rapid fire was opened on me, which I was quite unable to interpret. I asked the fellow to speak slowly, but as he was very much excited about something he jabbered away all the faster.

I then produced a slate and asked him to write what he wanted to say on it. This incensed him all the more, and seizing the slate out of my hand he dashed it on the deck, and turning on his heel strode off full of wrath and indignation to his boat.

As soon as he was clear of our ship we put our engines to half-speed and proceeded on our course.

What the French gunboat wanted we never found out. Under the circumstances it couldn't have been anything very important, and probably it was simply because we had not answered her signal that she sent an officer to us to demand an explanation. In those days signalling between our men-of-war and any other vessels was almost unknown. We had probably never used our commercial flags during the whole commission, so it is not to be wondered at that they were stowed away in a place which was impossible to get at without at least half-an-hour's work.

When I was a flag-lieutenant in the Channel Fleet many years ago I heard many a tough old yarn told at the admiral's table by some of the old sea-dogs who then commanded Her Majesty's ships. I wish I had made notes about them at the time, but alas! I did not, so I have to trust entirely to my memory for the two I am able to produce here.

The first concerns two British men-of-war engaged in battle with one another. A and B were two

sailing brigs commanded by lieutenants, serving on the West Coast of Africa. A was ordered by the admiral to carry dispatches to B, and rejoin the flag as soon as possible after delivering them. B was lying just inside the mouth of a river, and A in due course arrived and anchored a few hundred yards down-stream from her. The captain of A at once went on board his senior officer's ship and reported himself, delivering his dispatches and informing the captain of B of the order he had received from the admiral. He was promptly asked to dinner, and having been at sea for several days on salt provisions accepted readily enough.

The dinner went merrily and the port circulated so freely that friendship grew apace. As the cheery evening drew to a close the host very pressinglly invited his guest to breakfast with him in the morning, but his brother captain assured him that it was quite impossible, as he had to get back to the admiral as quickly as possible and must therefore sail at daylight.

A long argument on this point ensued, which was continued when the leave-taking finally took place.

"Remember, sir, that I am your senior officer and I will refuse to give you permission to part company."

"I don't care a damn if you do," was the reply, "I am acting under the admiral's orders."

"If you disobey my orders, sir, I will fire at you," answered the senior officer.

Treating this threat as a joke, the departing guest laughed and went over the gangway.

The next morning at six o'clock the officers and men of A were at their stations and the signal was hoisted, "Permission to part company." After a short delay the negative flag was hoisted by the senior officer and

immediately the cable of A was shortened in and the men were sent aloft to loose the topsails. In a very few minutes the sails were let fall and sheeted home. The topsails were then hoisted and the yards braced abox for casting.

At this moment the bugler on board B was heard to sound "Action," and the men could be seen clearing away their guns. Fortunately a strong stream was running and a fresh breeze was blowing down the river, so that A very quickly began to open her distance from the senior officer's ship. The anchor was quickly weighed, but not before a shot came flying across the water and splashed just under the stern. This was immediately followed by one which made a hole in the main topsail.

The firing then became general, but luckily the progress of the little brig down the river was very rapid, and the fact that she was carried dead astern of her opponent, so that the guns would no longer bear, saved the situation and she was not hit again. A bend in the river soon took her out of sight and the somewhat one-sided battle ended.

On rejoining the flag the captain of A reported what had occurred and the matter was referred home to the Admiralty.

B sailed for the Cape of Good Hope next day and was never heard of again. She foundered at sea with all hands, so the incident was never made public. I believe B was the *Sappho*, but I do not know the name of A.

Another yarn deals with the man who was flogged one day, and crowned king the next.

There had been some trouble with natives in one of the small West African States which had necessitated

the removal of the local king, and the native chief chosen to succeed him had to be brought up the coast by a gunboat. He was received on board with all due ceremony and given a cabin under the break of the poop to live in during the voyage.

Just outside this cabin it was the custom to keep the daily allowance of rum for the ship's company, because it was under the eye of the sentry who acted as orderly on the captain's door. Natives are very sensitive to the smell of rum and it was not long before the "Chief" smelt the fire-water. Peeping round the corner of the curtain which sheltered his privacy, he soon became acquainted with the fact that the rum was placed there at eleven o'clock every forenoon and was not served out till twelve-thirty, so watching his opportunity one day, when there was no one about, and the sentry had gone on a message, he sneaked out and managed to secure a jugful of the enticing fluid.

The result of this was a distinct shortage at serving-out time and a fruitless investigation as to who was the culprit. It was not until late in the afternoon that the captain, while passing the door of the Chief's cabin, noticed a strong smell of spirits, and, looking in, saw the black gentleman stretched out on the floor dead to the world, with a jug by his side half-full of rum.

Fortunately he had collapsed before he had been able to consume all the contents, or his reign would never have commenced.

The following day when he was brought up before the captain for his misconduct, his only excuse was that he didn't see why a king shouldn't have rum if he wanted it; but the captain informed him that he was not yet a king and must therefore be treated as

an ordinary subject. He was accordingly sentenced to receive four dozen with the cane, which filled the head Krooman with a savage delight when the hour arrived for him to administer the punishment.

The next day the little gunboat arrived at her destination and the coronation took place with great pomp. The new king seemed none the worse for his unfortunate experiences, except that he was a little anxious about taking his seat upon the throne.

Captain E. N. Rolfe, C.B., once told me the following story. His ship lay well north of the Tweed and he was ordered to London, and, being anxious to ensure privacy, arranged with the local railway authorities to let him have a third-class compartment for his first-class fare. The train left Edinburgh at 11 p.m. and he arrived at the station in good time and secured his carriage.

While standing on the platform, ten minutes before the train started, he was accosted as an old friend by a man who had only met him once. The train was very crowded and this gentleman asked the captain if he had any room in his carriage, as he couldn't find seats for his wife and himself. Always charming and kind, the generous sailor readily offered to take the couple in with him.

"We won't inconvenience you in the least," said the civilian, "as you will have one side to sleep on and my wife will have the other, while I will sleep on the floor."

The train started and the three passengers settled themselves down for the night. All went well until the Tweed was crossed, when the civilian began to complain to his wife about the hardness of the floor. Gradually his grumblings became more and more

frequent, until at last his wife could stand it no longer and offered to change places with him. This offer was accepted with alacrity, and the husband was soon snoring on the cushions while his wife lay on the hard floor.

No officer in the British Navy could have acquiesced in such an arrangement. His natural gallantry to the fair sex forbids it, so our captain, who had been a silent listener to all that had gone on, made the lady change with him and he lay on the floor.

As he was unable to sleep he reviewed the situation in his mind. He did not mind his bad luck in being done out of his compartment. What he objected to was that he had to lie on hard boards while a man who had behaved like a selfish, unfeeling brute to his wife, was comfortably snoring on the cushions.

Fortunately he had a strong sense of humour, and the situation tickled him to such an extent that he had many a good laugh about it afterwards, but he was very weary and sore when he reached King's Cross, and vowed that he would never be such a consummate idiot again as to pay a first-class fare for the privilege of sleeping on the floor of a third-class carriage.

One of my captains once gave me this yarn about himself.

He was living in London with his wife and was asked to attend a Freemason dinner. He was a tall man with a beard, and, finding himself too early, as he walked up St. James's Street, got a sudden inspiration that it would be rather a joke to go to the dinner clean shaved and see if any of his friends would recognise him. Twenty minutes later he walked out of the hairdresser's a new man.

At the dinner he had great fun, as no one knew him at first, but the deception was soon discovered amidst much good-natured chaff and the evening passed cheerfully away. By the time he reached his flat in the early morning his wife had been long in bed, so after undressing he slipped quietly into her room without turning on the light, and, getting noiselessly into bed without disturbing her, was soon asleep.

About seven o'clock, when the sun was streaming into the room, his wife awoke, and suddenly discovering herself under the sheets with a strange man, gave a loud shriek, jumped out of bed and rushed from the room. Her husband awoke in great alarm and thinking she had become demented followed her downstairs. He had quite forgotten everything that had happened the night before and was really alarmed about his wife's sanity. As soon as she saw he was following her she became terrified and called for help, upon which he assured her that there was nothing to be alarmed about. At last she recognised his voice and explanations followed.

A little later in the day a worm of a husband sneaked quietly out of the house and took himself to his club, where in the silence of a stuffy library he slept off the effects of a hard night followed by a thunderstorm of great violence.

A somewhat similar case of mistaken identity occurred once on the East Coast of Africa. A fancy-dress ball was being given on board the senior officer's ship, to which all the local élite had been invited.

The officers of a cable ship, employed on that part of the station, gave a dinner the same evening and several of the guests who were going on to the ball were in costume. One civilian, however, turned up

in ordinary evening dress and was chaffed for not being in fancy garb. His hosts told him that he must get some sort of a rig, and so he was fitted out with the dress of the native steward, his face, neck and limbs being artistically blacked with a burnt cork to make him look his part. He went with the party to the ball and apparently enjoyed himself thoroughly.

When the dancing was over he landed to go to his rooms. Now when he left his diggings before dinner he had instructed his two native boys to wait up for him. At about 4 a.m. these two faithful henchmen were dozing in the entrance when a suspicious-looking Swahili appeared on the scene and tried to get past them. Thinking he was a burglar they both threw themselves at him and slung him out. Our friend, forgetful of the fact that he was black, and furious at not being allowed into his own house, went for his two servants with his fists. Being a bit of a bruiser he had them both on the floor in a very few minutes and dashed up to his room.

In the semi-darkness he had not recognised his own boys and was surprised not to find them about when he got inside. Meanwhile they were much alarmed at the burglar's success and were afraid to tackle him afresh, so they crept quietly upstairs to see what the intruder was doing.

Peeping in to the bathroom they were astonished to see him washing himself, and still more astounded when they saw that his dark complexion was being altered to a white one. Not till then did they realise that they had been fighting their own master, and filled with remorse they flung themselves at his feet and craved for pardon.

Their master was not hard on them. He felt that

he could well trust himself to the protection of such devoted adherents.

I spent two of the happiest years of my life in a small craft, called the *Rocket*, on the Pacific station. The ship was a small twin-screwed gun-vessel and barque-rigged. She had a flush upper-deck and the accommodation below was just enough for her officers and men and no more.

We had done good work in the remote part of the station we were on, but, because we all loved the glorious life amongst the wilds of British Columbia, we were told we were an unnecessary expense and were ordered home. Now it is no mere bagatelle taking a ship of 600 tons burden, that only carried seventy tons of coal when her bunkers were full, a distance of sixteen thousand miles. Sails she had certainly, but her bottom was quite flat and she skimmed along the water like a soap-dish. However, our orders were clear, and home we had to go.

As the hour of our departure drew near acute nausea possessed our very souls. The senior naval officer, who had just arrived from the south, having no sympathy for us whatever, filled us up with all the rubbish he could collect for passage to England. The day before our departure my captain sent for me and said :

“ I have just received an order to take home a lunatic.”

“ A lunatic, sir,” said I, “ it is quite impossible : we have no place to put him.”

“ We must take him,” he replied ; “ an order of this kind must be obeyed.”

“ But where am I to put him ? ” I asked.

“ I don’t care a damn where you put him,” snapped

the captain ; " you'll have to arrange something."

Absolutely dumbfounded I left the cabin.

The next day my memory failed me. I forgot to send for the lunatic, and we sailed away without him. Our first port of call was San Francisco and we reached it five days later.

San Francisco is a pretty gay place, and amidst its many attractions we forgot all our past troubles and got busy. On the second day after our arrival there, when the gunner and I were the only two officers on board, we were startled by the report that a British man-of-war was in sight, steaming for the anchorage. Who the stranger could be we were unable to understand, as the only ship of our Navy within five thousand miles was our late senior officer and he was then at Esquimalt. At least we thought he was. A little later we found he was steaming into San Francisco with a signal flying to say that our captain was to repair on board immediately. Accordingly I buckled on my sword and had the four-oared whaler manned, in which I proceeded to pay my respects in accordance with orders.

I was not quite happy in my mind as I was being pulled towards the senior officer's ship. Thoughts of the lunatic kept constantly coming into my head, and by the time I reached my destination I felt as if my last hour on earth was approaching.

On my arrival on board I was at once shown into the captain's cabin, where I was received with short courtesy. A volley of questions was hurled at me by the indignant skipper: Where is your captain? What do you mean by leaving Esquimalt without the lunatic whom I ordered you to take? Why did you deliberately disobey my orders? I meekly replied

that the captain was on shore and that I didn't know anything about the lunatic.

"I'll teach you to disobey my orders, sir," cried the captain, warming up into a passion. "You will go back to your ship and take the lunatic with you, sir, at once."

As there was nothing more to be said, I left the cabin and slunk down into my boat, where I found the cause of my affliction seated in the stern-sheets awaiting my arrival. He seemed innocent enough though, and so I got him into conversation to try and keep in with him. He told me how his uncle John the Baptist was always trying to murder him, and that one of these days he hoped to get in his blow first. The difficulty was that every new face he met seemed to be his uncle, and consequently he never knew who to strike and who not to. This was pretty cheerful for me, and I began to perspire freely. However, I reached my little ship safely, and hopped out of the boat mighty quick.

Once on board we told off two marines to act as guard for the poor wretch and screened off a place for him to live in on the upper deck. It was a perfectly monstrous thing to have ordered us to take this insane man home in such a little ship. The voyage took nine months, and it was a certainty that he would never see it through, as he could not be properly supervised.

The next morning at daylight we left 'Frisco and sailed for Panama. Fortunately the weather was fine and warm, so our difficulty was not great ; but during the three weeks that occupied the voyage we lost all our pets and most of the officers' poultry. They were all thrown overboard.

A consultation took place as to how we could get

rid of the fellow, and at last it was decided to send him home with a time-expired marine from Panama, and this idea was carried out immediately we reached the Central American port. The feeling of relief when the poor man left the ship was universal, but I did feel sorry for the poor devil who was sent home with him. Whether they ever reached England or not we never heard. I should think it was very doubtful that they ever did.

We continued our voyage down the South American coast, for there was no Panama Canal and we had to take the long trip round South America. One of our troubles was that we were very short-handed, as several of our crew had deserted before we left Esquimalt, while others had skipped ashore at 'Frisco, and a few more went at Panama.

Desertion was a very serious thing on the Pacific coast and used to occur frequently. I remember two young seamen who "ran" when the little *Rocket* was lying in Esquimalt harbour. The first we knew of it was when the lighthouse-keeper from the Race rocks came up in his own boat and reported that he had two sailors locked up in the lighthouse, having saved them from drowning when they were swamped in a canoe in which they were trying to escape across the straits of Juan de Fuca to the United States.

I had to go down and fetch these two deserters myself, and knowing what sometimes happened I carried a loaded revolver.

When I got to the lighthouse in our four-oared whaler I immediately arrested the men, who I at once identified, and placed them in the boat. I then climbed up over the rocks to pay the lighthouse-keeper

his reward, and while I was doing this his assistant came to me.

"You had better go down to your boat at once," he said, "or you will lose the whole lot. They are now discussing as to whether they could all get away in the whaler."

It didn't take me many seconds to be on the spot, and, taking in the situation at a glance, I put the two deserters in the bows and, placing my loaded revolver beside me where they could all see it, I gave the order to shove off and we pulled back to Esquimalt.

I had no further trouble, and I am glad to say the captain punished the two deserters very lightly.

There was one rather amusing case of desertion which happened a few years before I joined the *Rocket*, when the *Zealous* was the flagship.

A new admiral had come out, and when the launch, a large double-banked boom boat, was pulling round from Esquimalt to Victoria to get the admiral's heavy luggage, someone shouted out:

"Hands up for Yankee land."

At the time the boat contained a midshipman, a warrant officer, the coxswain, and sixteen men.

As the majority of the men showed strong approval of the suggestion, the ringleader called to his pals to toss their oars in and arrest the officers.

This was quickly done, and the coxswain, showing an inclination to help the officers, was arrested too, and all three were firmly secured with rope and laid in the bottom of the boat.

About half a dozen of the men sat mute and did not join in the proceedings at all.

Finding themselves in possession of the boat, the mutineers cautioned the neutrals to behave quietly

or they would be thrown overboard. The mast was then stepped and sail was made for Yankee land, which was only fourteen miles away.

When the launch reached the nearest spot in Washington territory those of the crew who wished to desert landed, and the remainder released their officers and sailed back again to Vancouver Island.

Ten men had deserted and were never heard of again.

This systematic desertion was caused by the high rate of wages given in American territory, and greatly assisted by the fact that the local business men greatly encouraged it.

Five dollars (more than £1) was easily obtainable for unskilled labour per diem, and a man like a good carpenter or an artificer could demand almost what he wanted.

It is a wonder that anyone stayed in the Navy at all, for the able seaman's pay with allowances was never much over ten shillings a week.

By the time we reached Valparaiso we had not enough men on board to work the ship, so we had to get the British Consul to recruit merchant seamen to take the little craft home. There was no great difficulty in this, as there were plenty of sailors unemployed at the time and the prospect of going to England was a sufficient inducement.

So far our journey was under steam, because our voyages were short ones, along the coast from port to port, but we had to face a different proposition on the other side when we passed out of the Magellan Straits and got into the southern Atlantic Ocean.

After leaving Sandy Point we soon had the canvas on, and in a very few days were under treble-reefed topsails in a very heavy gale from the south-west.

I don't want to say a word against the merchant service, because I know that we only picked up its dregs at Valparaiso, but we had the most awful lot of scallywags I ever saw amongst our recent recruits.

How we ever got home I really don't know, for these men wouldn't lay out on a yard if it was blowing hard, but we did get home all right as this book shows.

CHAPTER XVIII

SOME SPORTING EXPERIENCES

BEFORE the days of our Entente with France our naval officers had many opportunities of salmon- and trout-fishing in the rivers of our oldest colony. The old treaties which were in force in those waters were very differently translated by the French and the British Authorities. The consequence of this was that quite a little fleet of men-of-war were kept busy watching over the interests of the rival fishermen.

When things settled down, after the Napoleonic Wars, the French were allowed to have the right of fishing off the coast of Newfoundland and to put up temporary buildings for the purpose of drying their fish, etc. The wording of the Treaty of Utrecht stated that they were not to be interfered with by the natives. This was translated by the French to mean that they were to have priority rights over the Newfoundlanders. It was quite obvious that the British would not agree to this and so there was constant friction, which kept our ships on the move, and most of the ports were visited several times during the fishing season.

As nearly every harbour possessed a river of sorts, and in some cases two, our naval sportsmen got some excellent fishing if they hit the particular river off at the right time. Unfortunately our work would not allow

us to stay more than a day at one place, unless it was for the week-end, so there was a good deal of chance about it. I remember one ship visiting St. George's Bay one summer, and having no luck whatever. A week or two later another vessel came along, and three of her officers got forty grilse in two days.

The greatest joy of all was to hit off the sea-trout. I have seen them so thick at the mouth of one of the rivers that they would take any fly the moment it touched the water, and one could catch as many fish, up to three and four pounds, as one wanted to. On one occasion a sea-trout just under two pounds took my bob fly in about six feet of water and immediately a five-pound cod was after it and took the tail fly. I was lucky enough to land both.

At that time a French man-of-war was in the harbour and some of her officers dined with us in the evening. When they heard our stories about the sea-trout they were very keen on having some sport too. We took them out next day and showed them where to fish, and what to do, but none of them caught anything, although we all went back in the evening with our baskets full. It seemed quite extraordinary, because no skill was required whatever.

There was a very nice little river which ran into the head of Hawkes Bay, which is referred to in Captain Kennedy's book on *Sport in Newfoundland*, where there is a famous boulder in midstream on which many a naval officer has stood while playing a salmon. A little way above this stone is a small fall, up which the salmon are able to get. This fall comes over an overhanging ledge, and it is possible to walk in a little way behind the fall on a lower ledge. One day, when the fish were not rising, I saw my captain walk

in there with his gaff and pull out a salmon of about nine pounds that was trying to get up the fall.

I was fishing this river once with an officer who had never fished in his life before. Finding no fish at the mouth we went up half a mile or so until we struck a likely-looking pool. He took one end of it and I took the other, and we started fishing. After the third or fourth cast I rose a nice fish, but he came short. I tried again, but he wouldn't look at me, so I changed my fly. That didn't improve matters, so I put my rod down and lit my pipe, intending to give the place a rest.

Meanwhile my friend, having seen no fish where he was fishing, came up and joined me with his pipe and we had a talk over our experiences. After a bit he got up and asked me if I would mind if he had a cast at my end of the pool. It wasn't quite a fair request, as I was obviously waiting for a purpose, but as he didn't understand fishing etiquette I told him to go ahead and try his luck. He was into the fish at once, and after about ten minutes' wild excitement on the part of the salmon and himself I had the pleasure of gaffing a fresh-run nine-pounder for him. I was a little disappointed at not catching it myself, but it gave him so much pleasure to catch his first salmon that I was really glad that the luck came his way. It was the only fish we caught that day, but we had a great evening to celebrate the occasion and went to bed happy.

One of the great drawbacks to fishing in Newfoundland are the flies and mosquitoes. There are several kinds of flies, but the mosquito is the very devil. All sorts of devices are used to keep him off, but whether you use a veil, or plaster your face with vile mixtures,

he will defeat you. There is a singularly nice river at Forteau, in the Labrador, which, at certain times, abounds with salmon. I knew that the flies were pretty bad there, because the river is well shut in by hills and there is a lot of vegetation close down to the banks.

However, I started off one fine warm day to try my luck and struck down on a likely-looking pool through the scrub and undergrowth. There wasn't a breath of wind and the flies were in myriads. My face was thick in carbolic and lard, but it was no use. I got to the river all right, and finding the place alive with salmon, commenced to put my rod together. Perspiration was streaming from every pore and my eyes were smarting from the carbolic to such an extent that I could hardly see. This delayed me in putting on my flies and nearly drove me mad.

At last I simply couldn't stick it any longer, and taking my rod as it was, rushed out of the inferno and climbed up the bank, never stopping till I reached a high point from which I could feel a movement in the air and get a little peace. Heavens, what a place! All the salmon in the universe wouldn't take me there again, so after a refreshing rest I returned to my ship, absolutely defeated by those infernal pests, the gnat and the mosquito.

In Hawkes Bay there is a river called "The Torrents," which holds a lot of fish. A brother officer and I once took a small Berthon dingy up the trail and launched it in a sort of lake just above where the rapids begin. We spent the afternoon trying to catch fish, but without much success, as we didn't know the pools, and as a matter of fact, didn't go far enough up the river. However, we caught a few trout

and quite enjoyed ourselves. Later in the afternoon, when it was time to think of returning to our ship, we started down-stream with the intention of landing just above the rapids and carrying our little collapsible boat down to the mouth of the river.

As we were nearing the trail, some sort of fascination came over me, and I suggested to my shipmate that it would be rather a lark to shoot the rapids. He laughingly replied, "All right, I'm on if you are," so our frail little craft was kept in mid-stream, and our speed rapidly increased as we approached the boiling torrent which poured over the rocks and boulders on the steep descent towards the sea.

The sight of the angry waters ahead now gave us both a feeling of apprehension, but it was too late to change the fatal decision we had made, so on we went in our mad career. Our first experience was to cannon against a huge rock, over which the water was pouring, and be swung round immediately like a teetotum and then shot off again in a new direction towards further dangers. Suddenly we got caught against a large boulder, the force of water on the opposite side heeling us over dangerously. I tried to push the boat off with my legs, but only succeeded in getting one of them so jambed that I couldn't move it. Fortunately at this moment she capsized completely and, finding myself free, I just hung on to the gunwale and trusted in providence.

My companion was in a similar position on the opposite side. Neither of us spoke, the situation was too desperate, besides which the noise of the rushing water would have drowned every word. This was the worst part of the rapids and we simply flew on in our downward race for the smooth water beyond.

Our little boat was quite submerged, but we both held on, and, avoiding by good luck all further obstacles, we soon found ourselves out of danger, but with our boat's gear scattered in all directions.

We got the boat into the bank and emptied her of water and then went off to collect the various articles we saw floating in the distance. We had been lucky enough to secure our two sculls first, so we had little difficulty in recovering everything. The experience had scared us both, for we had had a marvellous escape. As soon as we were able to discuss the occurrence we simultaneously said, "Well, we were a pair of damned fools." The rapids were nearly 400 yards long and, if we hadn't caught up on one of the rocks, we would have come down them in about thirty seconds.

In the year 1887 the ship I was in anchored at the head of Hall's Bay towards the end of September, as our captain had arranged to spend a fortnight on the White Hills hunting cariboo. He had asked me to join him in the expedition, and all the preliminary preparations had been made for the trip. He had engaged the services of two Indians and two Newfoundlanders, and these men were at Hall's Bay when we arrived.

Early on the morning of the day after our arrival we started the Indians off up the river in two canoes, with all our gear, to a lake about four miles away. The captain and I, with the rest of the party, started later and walked up along a trail in the woods, to a place where we had previously arranged to meet our Indians. Here we all got into the canoes and paddled the length of the lake, which was about three miles. Our party consisted of nine all told. The captain and myself, two Indians, two Newfoundlanders, our

cook, my marine servant and the captain's coxswain. We got all our party across the lake successfully and started up the long trail to the White Hills about mid-day.

It came on to rain heavily during the afternoon, and at four o'clock we halted and pitched our camp for the night. We had a large lean-to tent, across the front of which the Indians made a big fire and we were soon fairly comfortable. The Indians are wonderful people at this sort of work, felling the trees with great ease, and kindling the fire with birch bark, which burns very readily. We had an excellent meal and retired to sleep in our fleabags at an early hour.

Next morning we were up early and, after a hasty breakfast, struck our camp and moved on through the forest, reaching the high marshes soon after noon. Here a suitable spot was found, in the centre of a little copse, where we pitched our camp and made our headquarters. We had only brought enough meat with us to last two days, so it was necessary to start off at once to fill our larder. The country all around was dry marsh-land, interspersed with clumps of trees, mostly spruce and birch, which gave the appearance of little islands dotted here and there.

The Indians soon had a space cleared in our spinney for the tent, and as soon as it was put up, the captain took one Indian and I took the other and we went off in different directions in search of game. We had no luck at all in the afternoon, neither of us seeing anything, and we both returned to camp rather disappointed, as we had nothing whatever left to eat but some bacon which we had brought with us for our breakfasts. Next morning we were up early and off with our respective Indians determined to get meat

at any price. I took my servant with me in order to supply the camp with venison as quickly as I could.

We saw many fresh cariboo tracks, so it was evident that there was plenty of game about. We picked our way across the marshes and got out on to the clearer uplands without seeing anything, when coming to a bit of rising ground we had a good look round and discovered a couple of young beasts feeding amongst some short scrub a few hundred yards away. They had no antlers, so were not really worth shooting, except for the meat, but as that was the first consideration at the moment, I was pressed by the Indian to shoot one.

Crawling stealthily through the scrub to within 150 yards of the nearest cariboo, I got an easy shot behind the shoulder and bowled him over. The other beast went off as hard as he could go and showed himself over some rising ground about 300 yards away, when, the Indian urging me to shoot, I fired and I saw him roll over and lie with his legs kicking in the air. As the two animals were several hundred yards apart, the Indian and I went off to inspect the first one, which we found as dead as mutton.

We then went off to where the other had fallen. On our way there we saw some kind of beast about half a mile away travelling very fast, but we thought little of it at the time. As we couldn't find our second cariboo and as there were no signs of blood anywhere about, we concluded that the bullet must have grazed its skull and only temporarily disabled it. I was quite glad of this, as it was quite unnecessary to fire the second shot at all. We then returned to where the first animal was lying and the Indian proceeded to skin it and cut up the meat. When this

performance was completed I sent my servant back to camp with a haunch and the Indian and I went on alone in search of further sport.

My servant took some time to get his burden home, as it weighed about eighty pounds, and he had to rest frequently by the way. He told the men in the camp that he didn't think much of cariboo hunting as a sport, as, when he was sitting down smoking his pipe, a big stag came suddenly round a clump of bushes and stood looking at him from about fifty yards off. These things do happen sometimes when you haven't a rifle handy, but I always had to work hard for the heads I shot. However I felt rather small in the eyes of my servant afterwards, as I knew he thought it was a child's game.

My Indian very carefully secured the skin of the legs, out of which he made excellent moccasins, utilising the bend of the hock for the heel. A pair of these would last about four days, averaging twenty miles' walking a day. They were most comfortable and enabled you to move about very quietly over either wet or dry ground. When I got back to camp that evening, without any further experiences, I found that my captain had been lucky to come across some grouse as he was walking back in the dusk, and had knocked over a brace of them with his stick as they were running along the ground. They were a welcome addition to our larder.

The next day was very wet and we didn't do very much, but on the third day the weather cleared and we made an early start. On this occasion my Indian was my only companion, and up to lunch time we saw nothing. There was fresh spoor everywhere; probably of cariboo that had moved in a southerly

direction during the night. The stags collect their hinds about the 1st of October, when the rutting season is in full swing, and they travel about in herds of twenty or thirty. Later on they assemble in big companies.

Early in the afternoon a young stag and three hinds appeared round the side of a hill, and, as they appeared to be coming our way and we were to leeward of them, the Indian and I both crouched down amongst the heath and watched them. They were no use to us as we were only out for heads, but it was very interesting to watch them. They came quite near us before they scented trouble, as we remained immovable in our positions. When they were within twenty-five yards of us they stood stationary for a couple of minutes, evidently wondering what we were, then I jumped up suddenly from my hiding-place and they were off like a flash. It was a pretty sight to see them careering at high speed along the hill-side and leaping the obstacles which came in their way, and I felt thankful that I had not been tempted to fire at the pretty creatures.

As we worked our way home in the afternoon I came across a bit of open rough ground where my Indian spotted a fair-sized stag feeding alone. We were able, by means of dodging behind the intervening bushes, to approach this animal within 150 yards, when I got an easy shot and brought him down. He was a twenty-five pointer, and, as the afternoon was far spent when we had finished our work cutting him up, we took the head and started back to camp, leaving the meat to be brought in next day by the two Newfoundlanders.

My captain had also got a stag that day, so we were

both in merry humour and celebrated the occasion by opening a bottle of champagne that we had brought up with us for the purpose. The nights were frosty and ice covered the pools in the early morning, but our sleeping-bags kept us quite warm and we slept very comfortably. The exercise we got made us just tired enough, and we were all glad to turn in soon after nine o'clock.

The next morning I started off with the Indian and my servant on a long tramp out towards one of the Topsails. There are three of these peculiarly-shaped peaks which dominate the landscape and can be seen for miles, making excellent landmarks. It was a goodish way and we had to carry our blankets and enough food to last us for a couple of days.

It was well into the afternoon before we reached a high vantage point that we were making for, and from which we could get a good view of the surrounding country. I had a good look round with my telescope and made out a big herd of deer above five miles away. This was a bit far for the time of day, so we searched for game nearer the base of the hill we were on. After a bit we saw something moving in the scattered woods about a mile away, and we went towards the place hoping to see better when we got lower down. Reaching the flat ground we saw a couple of stags crossing the end of a marsh just in front of us, so we lay down and waited. They came slowly along and passed about 200 yards off, when I took a shot at the foremost of the two and got him; the other making off. We skinned him and hung the meat up out of the way of foxes, and taking his kidneys, made our way back to a place a little way up the hill where I had left my

servant and which we had chosen as our camping ground.

The Indian made an excellent little shanty of spruce boughs for us and we spent a comfortable night. The only drawback were the kidneys. They were so rank that we couldn't touch them, and had to send the Indian down the hill again to cut a piece off one of the haunches, so our dinner was very late. In the morning we decided to work our way back to the main camp again, as there was really just as much chance of meeting game that way as any other.

We were lucky enough to sight a fine head of antlers about mid-day, the stag apparently resting, as the sun made the day very hot. The ground was patchy with scrub and small trees, so it was an easy stalk, and I got him in the neck without much difficulty. We carried back his head and as much venison as was possible and reached our camp just after dark. During our absence the captain had also got a good head, so we had a cheery evening and discussed our different experiences.

During the next few days we each got another stag, but we let several beasts off, as we had decided to shoot nothing more unless the heads were exceptionally fine specimens. We had a very large supply of venison too, and the difficulty of getting it back to the ship perplexed us. Our men had heavy enough loads to take back as it was, so at last we decided to send one of the Newfoundlanders down to the ship with a note asking the commanding officer to send up half a dozen bluejackets, with a warrant officer in charge, to help us.

It was a grand idea, but we clean forgot that the sailor is not a good walker and wasn't in the condition

that we were all in. However, these good fellows eventually turned up at our camp, half dead, at nine o'clock at night, having taken fifteen hours to come the twenty-seven miles without any encumbrances whatever. We gave them a two-days' rest after their severe tramp and they soon recovered themselves; but I was very much disturbed in my mind as to how we were going to get them all safely back to the ship again with their loads.

During this time the captain and I had been out looking for big heads, but didn't have much luck until the sailors were in the camp, when we both went out to try some new ground. We started off in different directions, but curiously enough got on to the same stag and followed it from opposite sides. I didn't see him, nor did he see me, until I fired and missed, when he shot the beast and I came up and joined him. Just at that moment we saw a huge monster of a stag some distance off on the skyline, and I claimed the right to go after him as the captain had just shot his. He kindly agreed that it was only fair that I should have a chance at this fellow, so off I went.

We walked a good way before we saw anything more of the animal, but after an hour's hard tramping we came to a bit of rising ground covered with scrub and this we made for, hoping to be able to get a good look round when we got there. It was an ideal place to hide oneself in, and just beyond it was a lovely stretch of dry marsh, about ten or fifteen acres in extent, with an island of scrub in the centre of it.

On this marsh we counted twenty-six cariboo, and amongst them the biggest stag I had yet seen, with a lovely pair of antlers. As we looked down from our bushes we could see that this great fellow was much

concerned about the attentions which a much younger stag was paying to one or two of the ladies. The old boy chased the youngster off every time he came near the hinds, and it was quite exciting watching the fun. It was a little difficult to get near the old stag from where we were, so we had to wait until the position became easier. They were gradually moving along as they fed and at last they moved over to the far end of the marsh, leaving the little island between us.

Seizing my opportunity I slipped quietly down through the scrub into the marsh, and crawling along to the bushes in the centre, I found myself within seventy yards of the big fellow and saw he had a magnificent head. He was standing broadside on, evidently just alarmed, and I took a hasty shot, hitting him behind the shoulder. He gave one bound and fell dead a few yards further on, while the rest of the herd fled in all directions. What a splendid beast he was, with forty-one well-matched points. I couldn't help feeling sorry that I had been the cause of bringing his career to an end.

I was glad to get back to camp that night, knowing that I would not go out with my rifle again. I loved the excitement, the exercise and the glorious scenery, but I confess I hated shooting these fine animals.

The following morning it was raining hard, and as it was evident that the weather was breaking, I took the party of sailors back to the ship with as much venison as they could carry. We started at six o'clock, each carrying a load of about seventy-five pounds. The procedure was to walk for twenty minutes and then rest for ten and so on. All went well for a couple of hours, by which time we had gone about

five miles. Then we stopped for breakfast and half an hour's rest.

Up to this point I had led the way, carrying the head and antlers of my forty-one pointer and all my own gear on my shoulders. After breakfast one or two of the men began to lag, with the result that whenever we halted we had to wait ten minutes till the last one arrived on the scene. This made us lose time, so I reversed the order of sailing and put myself last of the line. This improved matters, until noon, when we stopped for an hour to have dinner. We were now about half-way and a good deal of grumbling was going on. The walking was quite easy, as there was a gentle slope the whole way down to the sea.

Our trail led through an open forest, which was free of fallen logs or other obstacles, and the only inconvenience was the rain, which continued to fall heavily. During the afternoon we had to cross one or two swollen streams, but the only person who came to grief was myself, for I slipped off the tree on which we crossed and went in up to my neck. The men were all gathered on the banks when I did this, and I think they were all glad to see me get a ducking, as they were getting fed-up with the persistent way I made them go on. Once or twice a man fell out and refused to go another yard. One fellow said he would prefer to lie down and die to going any further.

I dealt successfully with all these chaps in turn by promising each of them a glass of beer if he would keep on for another hour. On our way up we had hidden half a dozen quart bottles of Bass at a spot where I thought they might be useful on our way back, and they were really our salvation. The thought of this beer put new life into the men, but I had



Bow of Alacrity.

WARSHIP V. ISLAND.

The bow of H.M.S. *Alacrity* after her collision with Hong-Kong island. 1890.

been obliged to lie about its proximity. The one hour stretched out to two and then open revolt started. So about four in the afternoon I got the party together and told them that we were really within a couple of miles of the liquid, and that I was devilish thirsty myself and didn't intend to be kept waiting by them for ever. I should therefore go on myself as hard as I could and those who liked to could follow me, while those who didn't could go to Hades.

With that, away I went, and reached the refreshing beverage in half an hour and found it intact. By dribblets they arrived at long intervals; the last of the party, who was my servant, came in at half-past six looking as if he was going to his own funeral. We were now near the big lake, and after a decent rest we moved all our baggage down to the canoes and crossed to the other end.

As we were now only four miles from our ship and it was quite dark, I told the men that they could leave the meat behind in the canoes and come up and fetch it next forenoon, but I stuck to my own load, just to show them that I wouldn't give in whatever they did. I was very glad afterwards that they had nothing to carry during the last part of the journey, as it was rather a trying experience. The rain had washed a small rough bridge away which had been over a brook that we crossed on our way up. When we came to this place we found a lake, and we just had to go right in and try to find our way to the other side. It was no easy job. In some places we got in up to our necks and just floundered about in the dark.

At last I found some firmer ground and got in shallow water. The others followed me and eventually

we got on to dry land. The trail was now quite lost, but fortunately the rain had stopped and we could see some of the stars. The Great Bear came to our rescue and showed us the Polar star, by which means we got through the forest down to the beach soon after ten o'clock. I was never so pleased to see anything as the lights of our ship.

It had been simply a devil of a tramp, and we were all jolly glad it was over. We hailed our good ship, and a boat was soon sent in to take us all on board. The satisfaction of having brought my party through without losing a pound of venison sent me to bed well pleased.

Two days later my captain and the rest of our party turned up. Our bag had been four stags each, of which my forty-one pointer had been much the biggest. I had him set up at St. John's, and he now adorns the hall of a Scottish home not many miles from Auld Reekie.

CHAPTER XIX

STRAY YARNS

IN one ship I was in we had a fine lot of midshipmen, but they were not very happy in their mess, as the senior boy was somewhat of a bully and used to be unfair in his management of them. This went on for some time, until he got himself cordially disliked, and it soon became very evident that a mutinous spirit was abroad.

At last matters came to a head one evening when several of the youngsters were reported at rounds for having their chests unlocked and got their leave stopped. It transpired later that the senior midshipman had given the other boys away, so a secret meeting was held, at which it was decided to court-martial the offender in the gunroom after dinner. He was accordingly informed of the fact, and instructed to present himself before the tribunal at eight o'clock.

When the hour arrived and the Court proceeded to take their seats, the prisoner could not be found. A thorough search was made for him throughout the ship, but without success, so the Court had to be adjourned till the following day. But with the morrow no better luck came, for the senior midshipman had, like the *Snark*, suddenly vanished away. He came not to the mess for his meals, nor to his hammock for his sleep. He was simply *non est*. However, the search was not

entirely abandoned, and on the evening of the second day he was found smoking a cigarette under one of the boats on the spar deck. Very quickly the other boys were summoned, and he was dragged out from his retreat and set upon by the entire pack.

It was hastily decided to take him to the school-room and administer justice there, so he was immediately rushed off to the ladder leading below and almost hurled down the steps. When they got him into the school-room, all thoughts of an enquiry were abandoned, and he was put across the table and held there while each of the vindictive little devils laid on a dozen a piece. When it was over, he was informed that he would never be allowed in the gunroom again and that henceforth he must consider himself in Coventry. It seemed rather a severe punishment and brought forth a protest from one of the lieutenants, who said to an Irish lad who had been one of the ringleaders, "Now that you have given him his thrashing, you ought to be fair and let him come into the gunroom again."

"Never, sor; I wish I had killed him, be jabers I do," was the reply.

There was nothing more to be said, as is proved by the fact that to this very day the fire is still smouldering in the heart of a certain gallant captain who, though the kindest-hearted of men, has never forgotten the way he was bullied by that senior midshipman.

Sailors are proverbially fond of animals on board ship. It doesn't seem to matter what sort of a quadruped it is, its popularity is assured once it boards a man-of-war. I have seen some of the most appalling mongrel dogs I ever beheld, on the lower decks of His Majesty's ships, and the more wretched their appear-

ance the more they were adored. Ships' dogs have distinct characteristics of their own. The moment a ship anchors the animal wants to land, and after a short spell on the beach he wants to go back to his ship again. He has a distinct dislike to canine visitors, and even resents the appearance of another dog on the deck of a passing vessel.

It is curious that a wardroom officer's dog invariably makes friends with the men, while a captain's dog surrounds himself with a halo of importance, which at once denotes his superiority. I remember a little wire-haired terrier, which belonged to one of my skippers, who was the essence of dignity and never took any notice of anyone unless that person was untidily dressed. The moment he observed anyone on the quarter-deck, in rough or ragged garments, he went for them at once. This was very awkward as our ship was on a coast where fishermen often came on board in sea-boots and sou'westers, but the dog was no respecter of persons, for he would attack the officers equally when they put on old clothes to go fishing in.

Amongst the different kinds of pets that I have been shipmates with there have been bears, ourang-outangs, chimpanzees, monkeys of all sorts, goats, deer, mon-goose, and many others of the commoner types. The most intelligent was of course the ourang-outang, but the most useful one was a goat. Whenever any bills were sent off to the ship we always gave them to the goat and they were immediately devoured. It was such a simple way of squaring accounts that I have often wondered why the custom has not been universally adopted on shore.

In these most difficult post-bellum times a really strong billy-goat might even be able to stomach an

occasional income tax form without much inconvenience.

Perhaps a bear is the most popular of all pets. A young bear affords endless amusement, especially in a masted ship, where he is quite ready to play "follow-my-leader" over the masthead at any time. The best ones come from Alaska or the west coast of British Columbia and eventually grow fairly large. We had a beauty in one ship I was in, called "Juno." It stood over five feet on its hind-legs and was an alarming animal to meet on the narrow fore and aft bridge on a dark night. It was best to stand aside out of her way as she lurched along.

The dignity of our admiral received a sharp shock one evening on this narrow passage-way. Seeing Juno coming towards him he decided to stand boldly on, hoping that the bear would give way, but he was mistaken. Regardless of all decorum, Juno just pushed him aside with her great swinging head and the poor admiral was sent flying along the skidbeams. Previous to this unfortunate encounter the admiral and the bear had been on the best of terms ; but as could only be expected they were not on speaking terms afterwards.

Juno's pet aversion was a midshipman. She hated them, one and all. The reason was because these boys used to tease her every evening during the skylarking time. The chief trick was for a middy to sneak up behind the bear and make a hideous noise and then run. It always drew Juno at once and she turned and went after the boy immediately. Then another boy would cut in and make another noise, drawing her off from the pursuit of the first middy. So it went on until the whole gunroom had joined in the game.

The result of this was that whenever Juno sighted a midshipman she always went straight for him, but the youngsters were pretty wide-awake and Juno very seldom got more than a mouthful out of the seat of the boys' pants made from the best superfine Navy cloth as supplied by the firm of Gieves in Bond Street.

On one occasion, however, I did see a midshipman get just what he deserved. We were at general quarters and the gun's crews were being drilled by their respective officers. On the upper deck one of the snotties, a notorious teaser, was standing in the rear of a 6-inch gun when Juno came swinging along the deck. The midshipman was too busy with his drill to notice the bear, but the crafty old beast saw him all right from afar and most cunningly pretended she didn't as she approached as if to pass the boy. Suddenly, when just behind him, she rose on her hind-legs and putting her fore-arms round his body gave him a "magnificent" hug. It tickled me to see it, but not so the midshipman, for he was scared to bits and gave forth a yell of terror which brought the gun's crew to his rescue and old Juno was made to relax her grasp and clear out.

As a matter of fact there was no real danger for the boy, as the bear was fed on condensed milk and had no great strength in her muscles, besides which she was a toothless old wench. The poor old lady came to an untimely end soon after this, by falling down an open hatchway and receiving internal injuries from which she died. She was buried at sea with naval honours.

Dublin Bay is not altogether a good anchorage for a fleet. The lucky small craft that get into Kingstown Harbour are very much better off than the larger

vessels which spend their time rolling about outside. The sea gets up very quickly and ships have often had to raise steam and proceed to sea at very short notice. Some years ago an afternoon dance was being given on board one of the ships of the Channel Fleet, then lying off Kingstown.

All went well until about five o'clock, when the sea rose so quickly that all communication with the shore had to be stopped before any of the guests were able to get away. The fleet was under banked fires and at six o'clock the admiral ordered steam. At seven, a gale sprang up and all the ships went to sea. On board the ship that had been giving the dance there was great excitement amongst the ladies, but it was wonderful how things fitted themselves in.

The officers gave up their cabins and all the available spaces were screened off and made suitable for sleeping purposes with cots and couches. Sleeping garments were provided for the ladies by the midshipmen, while the canteen presented each with a tooth-brush. The men were easily catered for. The night was spent at sea, and in the morning the dancers were taken in to Belfast Lough and landed none the worse for their unusual experience.

I was serving as flag-lieutenant once on board one of the five-masters when the fleet was lying in Dublin Bay. My admiral landed in the afternoon as he had to go up to the city to attend some banquet. There was a good lop on outside and the ship was none too steady. Our little steam barge took the admiral to the Yacht Club steps inside the harbour, where, of course, the water was quite smooth. Here he met a party of ladies whom he knew, and who were very anxious to see the fleet.

The admiral knew quite well that it was rough outside, so I never quite forgave him for what he did. He told these ladies that they could have his barge to go on board his ship, where they would be received by his flag-lieutenant and would thoroughly enjoy themselves. The first I knew of this little game was when the yeoman of signals reported to me that the admiral's barge was coming off full of ladies. I flew up on deck and saw the little boat going up and down like a cockle-shell as she tried to make progress against the rough sea, and knew at once that there was going to be trouble, so I ran down to the wardroom and begged one of the lieutenants to help me through. He was a good chap and readily offered his services, so we both went up on deck to receive the party.

I guessed what had happened and inwardly reproached my chief for sending women off on a rough day; but there was no help for it, and so down the ladder I went with my best Sunday smile on and offered to help the young things out of the boat. I never saw such a collection of miserable-looking objects in my life, and the swell made it exceedingly difficult to get them out of the boat.

At first they absolutely refused to move and just leant against each other and moaned. As the boat was getting knocked about against the ladder by the sea I was determined to get them out of it at any price, so I got the other lieutenant to come down to the platform, while I jumped into the barge and got a move on.

One had to be rather brutal about it as a bad accident was quite possible, and one of the girls had to be actually carried on board; however, we got them all on the quarter-deck at last and commenced to treat

the whole affair as a joke. But it soon became apparent that the ladies thought it no jesting matter, so we took them into the admiral's cabin, where we had partly to undress one and put her in the admiral's bed as she was in a state bordering on collapse.

The other girls, not caring whether it was Christmas or Easter, did not participate in this part of the entertainment, but just lay about on the settees. After that we tried brandy and biscuits on them, which brought them round a bit, so at intervals we kept on repeating the dose. It was evidently hopeless to expect them to recover themselves on board, so the next thing that occurred to us was to get them ashore. They had been about an hour on board by this time and under our administrations had begun to evince a little interest in their surroundings, so assuring them that the sea was getting smoother every minute (which was a deliberate lie) we persuaded them to try and undertake the passage ashore.

It was a fearsome job getting them into the boat, as they were all terrified, and one of them, who wouldn't jump when she was told to, made the attempt too late, when the boat was about ten feet below the ladder, with the result that she nearly went overboard and was only saved by the admiral's coxswain who caught her in his arms and dragged her into the stern-sheets. Finally, when he got them all into the barge I gave the coxswain orders to shove off, and with a sigh of intense relief I went down to the wardroom and had a cocktail with my friend.

Smart seamanship has become a tradition in the British Navy. The following is an instance of what it was in the old days. A squadron was under sail and steam in the Western Atlantic. Four ships were in

columns of divisions in line ahead. The rear ship in the lee line, having had an accident to the blades of her propellor, was being towed by her next ahead. There was a steady breeze on the quarter and the fleet was making about ten knots with studding-sails set. The towing hawser was secured on board the leader to a slip in the captain's cabin.

All seemed well when the captain came on the poop after lunch and walked up and down with the officer of the watch, while on the forecastle the boatswain was at work with some of his men about the anchors as the squadron was due to arrive in harbour the next day. Curiously enough the officer of the watch was trying to get the captain to express an opinion as to what should be done in case of a man falling overboard. He put the question directly to his captain as to whether the disabled ship should be slipped from the tow or not. The captain did not give a definite answer and was rather talking round the point when the cry of "Man overboard" came from the forecastle, quickly followed by the rush of the lifeboat's crew to man their boat.

The officer of the watch dropped the lifebuoy right into the hands of the man who had fallen overboard as he passed abreast of the poop, and, giving the necessary orders with regard to the sails and the engines, ran below and slipped the ship that was in tow.

Meanwhile the rear ship shortened sail to topsails and came to the wind with her maintopsail to the mast. Her lifeboat was manned so smartly that the man in the water was picked up by it before he was passed by the rear ship.

On board the leader the hands were turned up to shorten and furl sails, and preparations were at once

made to pick up the tow again. Within ten minutes of the accident, the man who fell overboard was back on board his ship again and the lifeboat was hoisted. The leading ship then steamed slowly past the bows of the other, and by means of a small rope hawser got the wire on board. As soon as this was secured, as before, both ships made all possible sail and endeavoured to overtake the flagship, which by this time was about two miles ahead. The whole evolution had taken twenty minutes and it was warmly commended by the senior officer, who made the general signal "Well done" to the two ships concerned.

When things had settled down again the captain and the officer of the watch resumed their walk up and down the break of the poop. The captain told his lieutenant that he spoilt the whole thing by slipping the ship astern. The lieutenant was too loyal to reply. He admired his captain as a seaman and only wished that he had expressed his opinion a little earlier.

Before the day of bilge keels some of our old flat-bottomed ironclads used to roll terribly. With a heavy sea on the beam, oscillations from starboard to port, or vice versa, of seventy degrees were not uncommon. The indicator was only marked to thirty degrees on either side, and I have often seen the pendulum go beyond that. Sometimes one wondered if the ship could possibly right herself. When everything was properly secured it was not so alarming, but occasionally one got caught through a sudden alteration of course and the noise of the breakages on the mess-decks had a disturbing effect.

Pitching is unpleasant as it reacts on the stomach, but heavy rolling gets on the nerves and makes one angry. You can simply do nothing but curse when

the ship is trying to turn herself upside down. The worst time is during meals, when your soup goes in one direction and the leg of mutton in another. I remember one night at dinner in an old ironclad when the whole wardroom table was carried away and was hurled with great violence against the bulkhead. It was a T-shaped table and the chief engineer sat at one end of the arms of the T. Fortunately the cabin door was open just behind him and he went flying into the cabin. If the door had been shut he would have been cut clean in half.

One night on board a mail steamer going out to Japan the ship rolled so heavily that I had to sit up the whole night to prevent my wife falling out of her bunk. But the worst night I can remember was on board one of the five-masters when I was a flag-lieutenant. The admiral's quarters were under the poop and in the centre of them was a seven-inch 6½-ton gun, secured fore and aft to the deck by securing chains. This was a pivot gun and could be traversed to either side of the ship. The admiral's dinner-table was directly on one side of it, and I confess that when the ship rolled heavily, I was always in mortal terror of this great gun breaking away from its securing chains and taking us all out through the ship's side with it as it plunged into the sea. I always sat with my back to it and generally had one leg out ready to bolt on the slightest sign of danger. Not that it would have been the slightest use, as one could have done nothing at that angle with one's legs but fly straight into the scuppers with the gun.

On the night in question I never disenjoyed a dinner so much. It was awful having six and a half tons of metal high over your shoulders, every half-minute

threatening you with instant destruction. I don't think any of us were very happy as very few remarks were made and the meal ended quickly. When it was over I escaped to the poop, where I was much happier attending to my duties. The night was not unpleasant itself, the stars were all out and there was little wind. It was just the heavy swell which came rolling along from the Atlantic which caused us so much discomfort.

At about eleven o'clock I retired to roost. My bed unfortunately lay athwartships, but I had to make the best of that, and pulling off my clothes I turned in. It was difficult to get to sleep when one was altering one's position so rapidly from the horizontal to the vertical and back again, but I did manage to put in a couple of hours until the rolling became worse and everything in my cabin got loose and crashed about the deck. However, I did not see why I should be forced out of my downy couch by a treacherous and deceitful ocean, so I just lay where I was and wondered.

My cabin was an absolute wreck. Every drawer had slid right out and the contents were scattered in all directions. My toilet table hadn't an article on it; my photograph frames were all smashed; portmantaus, tin cases and all my boots had come down from overhead; and there I lay amongst all this chaos wondering what on earth had induced me to be such a blithering idiot as ever to go to sea.

At last I could stand it no longer. The noise, as everything slid about the cabin, forced me to seek refuge on deck. So I slipped on some clothes, which I had kept ready at the foot of my bed, and climbed over the debris and got out of my cabin. As my door led into the admiral's quarters I now found myself

in a new situation. I could see through the open door of the admiral's after-cabin that all was not well, so I crawled along to see what was wrong. There I saw all the furniture sliding backwards and forwards with the roll of the ship and the admiral on all-fours on the deck sliding with it.

Just as I arrived on the scene the admiral managed to escape into his sleeping-cabin and called out to me and told me to clear out of it or I would be killed. As the old gentleman was then quite safe in his swinging cot I took his advice and went off, spending the rest of the night seated on a signal locker on the poop holding on to the rails for dear life. With daylight, matters improved and the night's troubles were soon forgotten. But I still wonder how it is that there are some people who pay for such misery and call it pleasure.

It has often been thought that sailors never get sea-sick. I remember a horse soldier once saying that he thought it was as bad for a sailor to get sea-sick as for a cavalry officer not to know how to ride. But a sailor can quite well get sea-sick without being unable to do his duty. As a rule a sailor is never really sea-sick when he is on duty. It is only when he is down below in a confined atmosphere that he ever gets actually ill, and it is only a temporary indisposition, usually overcome after a few hours at sea.

I remember a middy who never could get through a meal safely and usually left the table between each course for a few minutes, but never failed to put in an appearance for the pudding. I have only known two cases of executive officers being really overcome by *mal de mer*. One was a captain, who never got over it, and the other was a lieutenant, who had the

text "There shall be no more Sea" hanging up in his cabin. Both men were miserable whenever their vessel left harbour. But these were exceptions.

I once served in a small training brig in the Channel, where we used to take boys out and try to knock them into shape. These young fellows had to go aloft in all weathers, and, it being their first experience of naval life, used to get horribly sea-sick. Washing tubs used to be placed along the decks, and I have often seen six or eight boys sitting round one of these receptacles in bad weather emptying their very souls into it.

Owing to the danger for those below, the boys who went aloft were made to be sick into their caps. It sounds brutal, but it was a necessitous order. Those little brigs knocked about fearfully and after a six weeks' cruise the boys were fit for anything, but it was a hard life while it lasted. I have never been sea-sick in a man-of-war since I was a midshipman, but curiously enough I was ill quite recently in a very severe tossing while crossing from Boulogne to Folkestone, and I can only think that my stomach was out of order at the time. The best cure for sea-sickness is the fresh air and a pocketful of dry biscuit with an occasional nip of whisky.

One cannot write about sea-sickness without thinking of the gallant captain who was seated in his chair one day when a sea-sick passenger came into the saloon absolutely *in extremis*. The captain jumped from his chair and said, "You can't be sick here, sir." "Can't I?" was the agonised reply. He was.

Here is another. She was a very beautiful war widow, and was leaning over the ship's rail on a still dark night, gazing at the angry, treacherous ocean, and wondering how much would be left of her by the time

she reached England. He was one of those brutal sailors who revel in the ocean misery of the uninitiated. Sailing close under her lee quarter he hailed her thus : " Darling, are you waiting for the moon to come up ? " With an expression of acute agony she turned her beautiful face towards him and in a pathetic voice said, " Good God, has that got to come up too ? "

I was travelling up to Scotland some years ago by the London and North Western and had a first-class compartment to myself as far as Crewe. Here we stopped for a few minutes and a middle-aged gentleman, who had evidently been lunching not wisely but too well, got into my carriage and sat down opposite me. As soon as the train started he began to talk, and in a few minutes asked me who I was. I replied that I was a lieutenant in the Navy, upon which he said it had been the ambition of his life to meet a naval officer, and insisted upon shaking me warmly by the hand.

I was a little embarrassed, because he didn't let it go after he had shaken it as is customary, but finding that I was more or less fixed in an iron grasp I just waited for developments with resignation. Holding my hand all the way from Crewe to Preston, he told me all about his own affairs and how he owned a large property in the west of Yorkshire. He said he had magnificent shooting and would be proud if I would accept an invitation to come and stay with him, when he would promise to give me the time of my life. Except for the fact that he held my hand for over an hour I had nothing to complain of, and indeed he rather amused me, and of course I promised to write and tell him when I could pay him a visit. He left my train at Preston and I went on home, not thinking very much more of the incident.

About two years later, when I was serving on a foreign station, some of us were seated round the wardroom table after dinner, when the conversation turned to a certain northern town, and an officer said that he came from that district. Hearing this, my thoughts turned to my railway companion and I said :

"Do you happen to know a great friend of mine who lives there, Mr. Cairns, of Caulker's Hill?"

"Good heavens!" replied my messmate, "he isn't a friend of yours surely?"

"Oh yes, he is," I replied, "I can prove to you that he is really a great friend of mine."

My messmate, however, was still sceptical, so I had to explain that Mr. Cairns held my hand the whole way from Crewe to Preston, and if that didn't constitute friendship I didn't know what did. However, I was much interested to hear the truth about the gentleman, and this is what I was told. Mr. Cairns was a very rich man and had a magnificent mansion and excellent shooting. His wife had been dead some years. He scandalised the neighbourhood by filling his house with young bohemians during the week-ends. Caulker's Hill was known to be the hottest country house in England. I was very young in those days, and I couldn't help thinking that it might have been rather fun if I had accepted the kind invitation of Mr. Cairns.

Writing about this train experience reminds me of another, which was a curious one. I was travelling from Carmarthen Junction to Plymouth, and opposite me in a second-class carriage sat a young man of about twenty-seven or twenty-eight dressed in a blue suit. I noticed the buckle of a Royal Naval sword-belt under his waistcoat, so I began to wonder who he was.

Then I noticed he was wearing a Humane Society's medal on his waistcoat, on the wrong side. This puzzled me, as I knew that no naval officer would be guilty of either of these two extravagances.

After a little while he began to talk and I asked him if he was in the Naval Reserve. He replied that he was in the Royal Navy, and asked me why I asked if he was in the Reserve. I replied that I was a naval officer myself and the fact that he had a moustache had prompted me to think he was in the R.N.R. He replied that he had recently returned from the China station and had let his moustache grow on the way home. This did not seem impossible to me, but the belt and the medal made me very suspicious of the truth of his statements.

As we travelled on towards the Ferry, it was before the tunnel was built, he told me a lot about himself and the ships he had served in. I asked him the names of his captains, but I was not able to recognise any of the names he mentioned as men I knew about. He told me that his father was a baronet and lived at Clifton. When I told him that I had to wait at Bristol for two hours for my Plymouth train, he at once asked me to dine with him, and pressed me so hard that I couldn't get out of it. The dinner was at an hotel near the station and was excellent. The wine was the best champagne on the wine list.

After dinner I went off to catch my train, and my host said he would come and see me off. I noticed that he didn't pay for the dinner, but I concluded he would do that on his return. But when we reached the station he told me he had just had a wire from his father who wanted him to go to Clifton at once. He had left his purse behind him and would I lend him

some money. My suspicions being now fully aroused, I said I would get him a ticket, so I bought a third-class one and saw him into his compartment, where his companion was a policeman, which I thought was exceedingly appropriate.

On my return to Plymouth I found there was no baronet of his name, nor was there any officer of his name on the R.N.R. list, and each of the names of his previous captains were also fictitious. I then wrote to the proprietor of the hotel at Bristol, where we had dined, and told him of my suspicions, but my letter was never answered.

The conclusion I came to was that this young man was a mariner of sorts, but that he was a very bad lot and was sailing under false colours.

Some years ago a curious incident occurred at St. John's, Newfoundland, which caused quite a little flutter in the dovecot of our oldest colony. A new Governor was expected, and the signalmen of the Senior Naval Officer's ship were on the *qui vive* for an incoming steamer flying his flag. About noon, on a fine summer's day, a large vessel was seen making for the entrance of the harbour with a Union Jack flying at her main.

The officer of the guard was instructed to board her on arrival and place himself at the disposition of the new Governor. As soon as the ship anchored, the guard-boat proceeded alongside her and the officer went on board, where he was informed that there were no passengers on board for St. John's, and that she had simply called at the port in order to communicate with the owners by telegraph.

He enquired why the Union Jack was hoisted at the masthead, and was told that it was the house-flag

of the company which the ship belonged to. It was then noticed that there was a small T in the centre of the flag, but in all other respects there was no difference between it and an official Union Jack. The officer of the guard returned to the man-of-war and reported what had occurred to the Senior Naval Officer.

There was a very definite clause in the Merchant Shipping Act which prohibited the use of naval flags for private purposes, and moreover laid down that even a resemblance was not approved of. Naval officers were given authority to haul such flags down by force if necessary, and the captain of the defaulting vessel was liable to a considerable fine.

Acting on his instructions, the Senior Naval Officer sent his lieutenant to the steamer with a written order to the captain, to the effect that he was acting in contravention of the Merchant Shipping Act in flying a flag resembling the Union Jack so closely that the difference could not be detected a mile off, and that he must haul it down. The captain replied that the flag was his house-flag and that he refused to haul it down for anyone.

On receiving this reply the Senior Naval Officer sent an officer with an armed boat's crew on board with instructions to haul the objectionable flag down and confiscate it. This was accordingly done, but as the cutter left the steamer someone on board ironically waved another flag of the same kind over the stern as if in defiance.

Nothing further occurred then, except that the infuriated captain went on shore to seek legal advice and, incidentally, to interview the press. The result of the latter step was that the evening paper came out

with a screeching headline, "Haul down that Flag," and followed it up with a lot of hot air about the arbitrary action of naval officers in general.

Just before sunset the steamer put to sea. As she left St. John's harbour her best and largest house-flag was broken at her masthead in defiance of naval authority. The passengers on board, who were all Americans going from Europe to the States, complimented the captain on his victory, and they all had a great night of it on board to celebrate the "Freedom of the Seas."

The Senior Naval Officer, having observed the insolence displayed as the vessel left the harbour, had no option but to report the matter to the Admiralty. A few months later he received a communication entirely approving of his action and informing him that the company had been ordered to change their house-flag, and that the captain of the steamer had been dismissed from the company's service.

CHAPTER XX

OCEAN FISHING

ALADY once remarked to me at dinner, knowing I was a sailor, "I suppose you always get fresh fish at sea?" "Oh yes," I said, "the sea is full of fish and all you have to do is to catch them." She thought that sounded quite natural and made no further comment. In these days of fast steaming I fancy sea-fishing is scarcely ever attempted, but formerly, when our vessels used to flop along under sail in light winds in the tropics, an ardent fisherman would often reap a rich reward. Slow steaming, at the good old economical speed of four or five knots, gave similar opportunities, but it was better to be under sail, as the churning of the screws certainly kept the fish farther afield.

The favourite place to fish from was under the bows when the water was quite smooth and the ship going about three knots an hour. You could either use the grains (a kind of glorified harpoon) or troll a piece of white bunting along the surface of the water. It was a pretty sight to see the dolphin playing round a ship that was moving slowly in mid-ocean. Their rapidity of movement and sparkling colours were fascinating attractions as they moved swiftly through the depths. One moment several of them were under

the bows, when suddenly they would vanish in different directions, to return a few seconds later in orderly procession as if all their movements were calculated and precise. Then by instinct they were all off again, to dive the full length of the ship and reappear under one of the quarters. Suddenly a new idea seized them and they went off in different directions ; some were now under the bows, some under the stern, and others dashed past the ship on either side.

It is a glorious sight, especially on a moonlight night, when the sea is phosphorescent, and the flashing brilliancy of the great fish dashing through the water is almost startling in its powerful effects. The porpoises are much heavier fish and more methodical in their movements, but they too play round a ship. Sometimes, unlike the dolphin, they come in great shoals, and after gambolling around for half an hour or so, will move off in another direction. At other times a few porpoises will follow a ship for many hours. Albacore and bonito are common enough fish to be met with, but are not nearly so often seen, though perhaps just as readily caught, as the dolphin.

In a little square-rigged gun-vessel that I once sailed in, I often used to go down on the backropes, and, with my left arm round the dolphin striker, would poise the grains in my right while I waited my opportunity to throw my weapon at whatever prey came within my reach. One afternoon, crossing the mouth of the Gulf of California, I noticed a number of turtles lying idly about on the oily surface of the sea. There wasn't a breath of wind and we were steaming slowly towards Mazatlan. I got the grains ready and climbed over the bows and took up my position

on the backropes, under the bowsprit. Many turtles were passed, but none came nearly close enough.

At last I saw one right ahead that we were steering directly towards. It wasn't a very big one, but that would make it all the easier to haul on board if I hit it with the grains. Full of excitement I waited breathlessly for my opportunity, fearing that the approach of the ship would startle it and send it into the depths below. Nearer and nearer came the sleeping turtle until it was almost under me and I made my shot and got home. The end of the rope was quickly manned by the watching sailors on the knighthheads and in a few moments the turtle was lying on the deck.

I had a much greater success once off Delagoa Bay, when I got a much larger turtle weighing well over 300 lb. I was on the bridge of a cruiser, when the signalman reported a large turtle off the port beam. I stopped the ship immediately, lowered a small skiff, and within a few minutes was after that turtle with the grains. There was rather a heavy swell on, and, when I got into the little boat, I couldn't see where the beggar was, so I had to be directed from the ship. I had one man with me. He sculled, while I crouched in the bows ready for action. Up one wave and down another we went, seeing nothing, until at last I saw our friend about twenty feet ahead of me just commencing a dive. He was too far off, and, as the men shouted from the ship that he had gone down, I turned sorrowfully away. Almost immediately I was told that he was up again, so I resumed the attack.

Guided by voices from the vessel, for the whole

ship's company were now excited spectators of the adventure, we continued our progress over the mountainous billows towards the object of our endeavours. It was no easy matter, for the little skiff was very much down by the bows and steered badly in consequence. At last we reached the top of a wave, and just a few feet in front of me was the turtle, with its head down and tail up on the point of diving. Instantly I hurled the grains, and, at the same moment, lost sight of the quarry and all my line ran out. What had happened I didn't know, but I concluded I had made a bad shot. Hauling in the line I was astonished to find that it suddenly became very heavy, and I soon discovered that the barbs of the grains had caught the turtle in the soft skin under one of his foremost flippers, and it was holding well.

In the excitement the skiffman and I between us nearly capsized the little boat, but we succeeded in getting a rope round our prize, and towed it alongside the ship, where willing hands were waiting to hoist it on board.

Talking of turtles, I once brought a huge one home alive from St. Helena. I kept it in a canvas bath on the upper deck, and it laid about a hundred and fifty eggs between Sierra Leone and the Scilly Islands. I believe it would still have been laying eggs if we hadn't made it into soup when we got home. There was something about the past life of that turtle that I had my doubts about.

The hide of a porpoise is pretty tough and you have to hit him fairly hard and very straight in order to get home. They were fairly easy to strike under the bows, but more often than not the metal neck of the harpoon or grains was bent and didn't pene-

trate the fish. One day in Durban harbour some porpoises had got inside the breakwater and were playing about in the shallow water. One of my lieutenants came away with me in the skiff to try and harpoon one of them. It was about the maddest piece of folly that we could possibly have thought of, for our boat was tiny and if we had harpooned a porpoise we would have been towed along at about thirty miles an hour and would have followed the fish in his mad career out to sea, regardless of all obstacles that we were bound to encounter on the surface and under which he dived.

A fine chance presented itself as a huge monster came playfully past the bows of the skiff. I was all ready for him and threw the harpoon with great energy at the right moment. I hit him clean, but through the mercy of God the harpoon bent double with the impact and didn't penetrate. The dash off which the porpoise made on being hit filled me with consternation, and I said to my young friend, "Supposing we had got into that fish, where would we be now?" "I don't know, sir," he replied, "but I think we are rather lucky." Immediately the porpoise had gone off he dived straight under a steamer. That set us both thinking a bit and we returned to our ship to seek a less dangerous pastime.

Dolphins are most easily caught with just a bit of white flannel, or a strip of salt pork fat, on a good-sized hook, towed so as just to touch the water. Yachtsmen use elaborate sea-rods, but in the Navy we used to be quite successful enough using the whisker ends forward, or a boathook staff rigged out over one of the quarters. The curious thing about a dolphin is that it completely changes colour when it is brought

on board and continues to do so till it actually dies, which takes some time.

Of course these deep-sea fish are all very coarse and could never be relished as food. The only ocean fish that really are delicious are flying fish. One of the nicest breakfasts I remember was one morning watch, when one flew on board my ship and fell at my feet on the quarter-deck. I picked it up and sent it to the cook, who fried it to perfection.

If one only knew more about the secrets of the sea, it might be possible to draw more frequently on its stores of food, but many vessels constantly pass within a few yards of untold wealth of this kind without knowing anything about it. I remember once, by chance, finding out that unlimited fish were to be caught near a certain patch of shoal water which was marked on the chart. This patch was only comparatively shoal, as it had fourteen fathoms on it at low water. I was steaming over it one day in my ship, and, acting on information I had received privately, stopped the engines. The men were told to put their fishing-lines out and soon all hands were on the nettings fishing for dear life, and hauling in monsters of anything up to twenty pounds. We stayed a couple of hours and then continued our voyage with enough fresh fish to last the whole ship's company for two days. After that we always repeated the experience whenever we had the opportunity.

I know one place on the east coast of Natal where there are millions of fish waiting to be caught always. The only difficulty is that the place also abounds with sharks, who occupy the water near the surface, and you have to get your fish from the bottom to the

surface through these robbers, who don't let much escape them.

The present-day sailors don't know so much about sharks as we used to in the days of constant cries of "Man overboard." The old sailors hated sharks to such an extent that they enjoyed torturing them. Nothing pleased the men more than to catch a shark and torment it after it was caught. It was also considered great sport to attach a little gun-cotton to a piece of pork and explode it just as the great fish opened its mouth and took the pork. They are horrible brutes anyway and deserve no sympathy from those who go down to the sea in ships and do their business in great waters.

Many years ago, when the present Lord Beatty was serving on the Mediterranean station as a young lieutenant, he and I took part in an escapade which struck me at the time as being rather a peculiar way of enjoying life. I believe he rather liked it; but he was younger than I was and probably by far the better horseman. We had both been invited to accompany the admiral in an expedition to shoot duck on a lake a few hours up the railway from Smyrna.

It was very pleasant weather, and there was every prospect of good sport, so we left the seaport with light hearts. The gallant admiral was very kind to us all and had taken plenty of provender to satisfy the inner man. Besides which we had a good supply of pre-war whisky which didn't require to be measured out in "doubles."

We reached our destination early enough in the afternoon to be able to try our luck on the lake after the duck. I went out in a boat, and, skirting along

just off the bank, had some capital sport with my gun at the birds as they rose singly from the tall reeds. In less than an hour I shot twenty ferruginous duck and would have got many more if darkness had not stopped the sport.

Our party spent the night in a group of small wooden shanties, which belonged to the owners of the shooting, and which had been lent to us for the occasion. Everything was very primitive and we slept on the floor. We were just thinking about turning in for the night, when there arrived on the scene an Englishman, with a native guard and a couple of spare horses. He said that he had heard of the admiral coming up to shoot duck and had ridden over from his mills, some twenty miles away, to invite him and another officer to join in a pig drive, which he had arranged for the following day.

Unfortunately the stranger had imbibed a good deal of liquid, and, having noticed this, the admiral did not readily accept the invitation. While the matter was being considered he went out to look after the horses, and, having done that, joined our sailors in their shanty and told them some exciting local stories. Every now and again he illustrated his yarns by firing his revolver off through the roof. This fairly scared the admiral's coxswain, and he came over to our house for safety and told us all what had been going on. This settled the point for the admiral. Nothing would induce him to go.

Volunteers were then asked for and the two youngest members of the party were only too glad of the chance. It was arranged that we should get in a few hours' sleep first and start off on the horses at three a.m. The

intervening time soon slipped by, and after swallowing some hot cocoa we were in the saddle and off through the murk.

Our steeds were fortunately very sure-footed animals and the native guard, who was a retired brigand, knew every inch of the way. We had to carry our rifles, ammunition, and what garments were necessary, the best way we could, and this paraphernalia was an infernal nuisance. The night was very dark, and our host, who was flying light, went off at a hard gallop the moment we started. He had no stirrups and rode recklessly, calling to us from time to time to keep up the pace.

Whether we followed any path or not I could not tell, for I could see nothing. My gear was swinging about, and I was in mortal terror of dropping a beautiful double-barrelled .500 Express rifle, which had been lent me by my captain for the occasion. There were rocks and boulders all over the place and the rifle might easily have been badly damaged if it had fallen on one of them. The horses picked their way wonderfully, but the pace was too hot for a sailor, and I was inwardly praying that our rash host would get a spill which would teach him a lesson and make him reduce his speed.

For nearly two hours this awful experience lasted without a break, and my prayers grew more resolute as our host, whom I now hated, became almost abusive when I begged him to slacken his speed. Once or twice as I saw him lurch in his saddle my heart became full of hope and I prayed all the harder. At last, just as the streaks of early dawn were commencing to light up the Eastern sky, his horse stumbled and over he went. We pulled up immediately and found

that the poor fellow was badly bruised. I was honestly sorry for him then, but he recovered in a few minutes and remounted. After that, conditions were much improved by the light and we had a most enjoyable ride to our destination, which we reached in time for an excellent breakfast, which was prepared for us at eight o'clock. Our host was really a charming fellow and did all he could to make us comfortable.

As soon as our repast was over we started off to take up our stations for the pig drive, while a crowd of beaters went off to the other end of a long valley, from which they intended to make their start. A range of hills ran along one side, while a low spur stood out across the end of the valley on which the guns were posted and over which the pigs were to be driven.

The valley or plain, along which the beaters advanced in line, was covered with rough scrub, and, as most of the men were armed with antique muzzle-loaders, which they continually fired off, there was a pretty good old din as they came shouting along. One would have thought that any self-respecting pig would have quitted the neighbourhood before they even commenced the drive, for the tumult was unceasing. No luck came my way, but we took back one huge boar which had been killed by one of the natives.

We had the greatest difficulty to get the great beast down, as the porters at the railways absolutely refused to touch it. It was against their creed. But two young naval lieutenants are not easily defeated, and in due course Master Piggy was taken to the flagship and presented to the admiral in order to show

him what he had missed. There is a story attached to that pig which, however, must ever remain a close secret between the present distinguished naval officer and myself.

CHAPTER XXI

COURT-MARTIAL HUMOUR

ABSURD situations often arise at courts-martial, but I only propose to touch on one or two here which have impressed themselves on my memory.

An officer was being tried for drunkenness and his servant, a gallant marine, was called by the defence and questioned as follows :—

“ Was the prisoner sober ? ”—“ No, sir.”

“ Was the prisoner drunk ? ”—“ No, sir.”

“ Then what state was the prisoner in if he was neither drunk nor sober ? ”

After a moment's thought the witness replied :

“ He was in the state that officers usually are in after dinner.”

In another case a prosecuting captain, who was very anxious to prove his own sobriety, which was called into question by the prisoner, placed his black steward in the witness-box and asked him if he remembered seeing the prosecutor on the occasion in question.

“ Yes, Sa, I see you, Sa,” was the eager reply.

“ Was I sober when you saw me ? ”

“ Yes, Sa, you quite sober, Sa.”

“ How did you know I was sober ? ” asked the prosecutor.

“ Because you order good stiff whisky soda, Sa.”

A lieutenant was being tried for behaving with contempt to his captain, when, as officer of the watch, he received the captain at the gangway when he returned from leave at a late hour at night.

The prosecutor began by cross-questioning the witnesses as to the offence, and when this was over the prisoner was asked if he wished to ask any questions.

The first one he put created a sensation.

“ What condition do you consider the prosecutor was in when he came on board ? ”

The prosecutor objected to the question, as he had not had time to prepare his defence. The Court was cleared and the question was considered. On the Court re-opening the President announced that the prosecutor had had ample time to prepare his case and the question would therefore be allowed.

The witness replied that he considered that the prosecutor was not sober on the occasion referred to.

The prosecutor then asked for an adjournment of the Court, as he argued that he and the prisoner had apparently changed places. The Court would not sanction this, so the next witness for the prosecution was called and the same questions and answers were repeated.

The third witness, who was the corporal of the gangway, was not so emphatic. He would have passed the prosecutor if he had been a seaman, but not as an officer.

Notwithstanding this evidence being so strongly in favour of the prisoner, the Court found the prisoner guilty and gave him a light punishment, but naturally enough it did not pass the Judge Advocate. When the papers reached London the proceedings were

quashed and the prosecuting captain was placed on the retired list.

An officer had been drinking not wisely but too well and got into trouble because he was too noisy at the mess dinner. When he was being tried by court-martial he called his own servant to give evidence on his behalf to prove his sobriety.

Prisoner : " Was I quite sober on the night in question ? "

Witness : " Yes, sir. "

Prisoner : " You saw me just before I went to bed ? "

Witness : " Yes, sir. "

Prisoner : " You are quite sure I was sober ? "

Witness : " Yes, sir. I am positive. "

Prisoner : " What makes you positive ? "

Witness : " Because you told me to call you early, as you were going to be Queen of the May. "

In a small gunboat on the China station many years ago there were two sub-lieutenants who did not hit it off very well and occasionally very rude epithets flew across the wardroom table. One of these young men was the navigating officer and the other was the executive officer. On one occasion the former wanted a boat to go ashore in, but owing to the exigencies of the service it was refused him by the latter.

This led to words and the navigator applied rather a strong expression to his messmate which was naturally resented. The executive officer threatened to report the matter to his captain if the word was not withdrawn.

" Report and be damned, " was all the reply he got. So he reported, with the result that the captain (a lieutenant commander) sent it on to the admiral.

A week or two later, during an altercation, the

executive officer lost his temper and said fearful things about the parentage of the navigator, upon which the latter demanded an immediate withdrawal of the offensive expression or *he* would report. As no withdrawal was forthcoming he reported and his captain sent the report on to the admiral.

As three ships were necessary for the court-martial which the admiral ordered, it took a couple of months before it could be held, and then both officers were tried the same day for "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman," and were both severely reprimanded and dismissed their ships.

One of these bright souls found his way out to the Mediterranean a year or so later, and got into trouble again when his ship was at Gallipoli in Admiral Hornby's time. He had been up to some lark on shore, and had shown too much interest in the harem of a certain Turk, by peeping through the keyhole at the ladies, to which the old gentleman objected so forcibly that the gallant (*sic*) naval officer had to beat a hasty retreat.

Resenting this very strongly, our young friend took immediate steps to carry out reprisals. It so happened that the sailors from his ship were on leave in large numbers in the town, so he went round the drinking booths and enlisted a lot of sympathy by telling the men how an old Turk had tried to murder him because he had taken the part of some women who were being cruelly treated.

As the sailor is ever the champion of the weaker sex, a call for volunteers to revenge the action of the Turk was quickly responded to. A meeting of nearly two hundred enthusiasts was held outside the town, and it was decided to attack the walled-in hacienda of the offender without delay.

As the position to be assaulted was a few miles away, the sailors decided that it would be easier for them if they were mounted, so with this end in view they scattered in search of steeds. After about an hour most of them returned with some sort of a four-footed animal. There were goats, donkeys, ponies, mules, and horses. One man brought a camel, but he sat down and refused to get up again, so he was scratched off the register.

After a fruitless attempt to marshal them into any sort of formation, the order was given to advance, course north-east; but as no one had a compass the course didn't matter much. Fortunately the hacienda was plainly in sight, so the brigade swept on. Slight divergencies occurred on the way out which taxed the energies of the staff to keep the heterogeneous quadrupeds within limits, and many gallant sailors, unused to the peculiarities of the motion, rolled off; but the casualties were only about 50 per cent. and the attackers arrived at their objective in due course nearly eighty strong.

The noise of the approach of the sailors had attracted the attention of the local inhabitants, so no time was wasted in dismounting. Indeed, most of the sailors landed from their craft over the bows, as being the simplest method when the engines were put to full speed astern.

Calling out, "Follow me, boys," the commander of the force drew his revolver and rushed boldly at the defending wall. With a heroism which was worthy of a better cause he scaled the escarpment and landed in the Turk's garden, followed by a handful of his soberest adherents.

Only one of the enemy was in sight. Climbing the

opposite wall he was seen hastily removing himself from the premises. Without a thought the commanding officer covered him with his revolver and fired. There was a cry of pain as the figure rolled over the top of the wall and disappeared on the far side.

This sudden and unexpected turn in the events of the campaign caused a quick reaction. An immediate retreat was ordered and the field was left to the unseen enemy.

When the roll call was sounded outside the walls of the hacienda it was found that, from mysterious causes, the bulk of the omnifarious quadrupeds had disappeared and all that was to be seen were a few weary figures who were dragging their tired legs in the direction of the town. The survivors had nought to do but retrace their steps in a similar direction, and so the campaign ended.

The following day a fat old Turkish gentleman, with a severe limp and many bandages round his buttocks, came on board the flagship to complain of the assault that had been made on him the day before by a larged armed force from the fleet.

This report led to enquiries being made, with the result that the leader of the expedition was bowled out and tried by court-martial. We concluded that he must have thought his case was a hopeless one, for he made no attempt whatever to excuse himself for his action.

He simply pleaded that in an adventure of this kind it was only right and proper to search for the good which could be got out of his experiences. He claimed that he had proved beyond all doubt that sailors, when employed as mounted infantry, were

a complete failure. The fact may have been suspected before, but it had never been so clearly demonstrated on active service.

One man, whose steed had persisted in making his progress backwards, had caused great delay by dismounting and putting the bridle on over the tail. As this appeared to interfere with the steering, he hoisted the signal "Not under control" and hauled out of the line. Another sailor got his helm jammed hard aport and kept going round and round in circles. This so disconcerted him that he got giddy and fell overboard. One man, a brave marine, who was riding a mule, thought he would prefer to be towed, so slipping quietly over the quarter he made fast astern. This plan worked very well for about thirty seconds, when the mule, through some misunderstanding, landed his heels in the marine's stomach, which caused the tow to part and the marine became a casualty.

There were numerous cases of rank mutiny amongst the animals. Some of them absolutely refused to allow the sailors to touch them, while others seemed to make a joke of the whole business by permitting their riders to get seated, when they immediately unshipped them again.

In no case did any of the men arrive at the hacienda on the animals that they originally started on. There were so many dismounted riders and riderless animals that it became expedient to remount whatever was nearest. One sailor, who had got tired of this constant exchange of seats, gave up the unequal contest and hoisted a wounded chum on his shoulders and continued the advance on foot.

The prisoner pleaded that having shown the Court

how impossible it was to carry out such an expedition successfully, with such an inadequate force, he placed himself entirely at their mercy and asked for an acquittal. The prisoner was sentenced to be dismissed the service, and the poor old Turk, like the Scotchman, who had to pay half-a-crown for his bed, couldn't sleep for thinking of it.

CHAPTER XXII

THE DOGS OF WAR

AT the outbreak of the South African War I was serving in H.M.S. *Rodney* at South Queensferry. I had been recently married and my home was in those parts, so the appointment was one of my own seeking. It suited me for the time ; but I hoped for better things.

The day war was declared I wrote to Lord Walter Kerr and volunteered for service in South Africa, and about ten days later I received a telegram ordering me to the Cape. It appeared that I had been the first to send in my name and that was why I was chosen.

I was sent out in command of a naval brigade of 400 officers and men to reinforce the station, and we sailed from Southampton in the Union liner *Briton* early in November, 1899. The ship was full of ammunition and carried about 2,000 naval and military officers and men. We actually had on board several Dutchmen who were on their way out to South Africa to fight against us. Perhaps this was a safeguard, perhaps it was stupidity, perhaps both.

On my arrival on board, the captain of the *Briton* asked me to go and speak to him in his cabin. It was a nasty, dark, drizzly afternoon, and having just left my young wife I was feeling pretty miserable as I entered Captain Griffin's cabin.

I saw at once by the captain's face that something was wrong as he handed me a letter to read. It was anonymous and warned us that an attempt would be made to blow up the ship during our passage to Capetown.

We sent for the lieutenant-colonel commanding the troops and had a pow-wow over the situation, with the result that sentries were at once placed at all the hatchways and I personally went and inspected all the holds.

I didn't believe that there was any danger, but having had this warning, every possible precaution was taken and all the passengers' luggage was removed from the proximity of the ammunition. I also reported the matter to the Admiralty, pointing out to them the danger of sending troops by the same ship as a large quantity of ammunition, and suggested that the latter should be transhipped when we reached Madeira, but this was not done.

It is as well to notice here how the naval officials look after their brother officers' interests. When I got on board the *Briton* I found that the senior military officer, a lieutenant-colonel junior to me, had been given the best cabin in the ship, as a matter of fact a suite on the upper deck, while the naval transport officer had engaged an ordinary cabin between decks for me. I made no protest because personally I didn't care where I was, but it struck me that I ought to have raised Cain for the good of the Navy generally.

While all these little troubles were disturbing my mind, a young military officer came up and asked me which hold his luggage was in. This was too much. It was the last straw which broke the camel's back. Turning on him a look of withering scorn, I said, "Sir,

I am a Commander in Her Majesty's Navy." He went off like a whipped dog. Perhaps it sounded brutal, but he deserved it for not knowing the uniform of a Naval Commander. Soldiers are often guilty of mistakes of this kind.

A couple of days after we went to sea there was a row amongst the second-class passengers, and one man, evidently a Dutchman, drew a revolver. He was at once arrested and brought before me, when I gave orders for him to be locked up in the cells. The following day the captain and the lieutenant-colonel both got cold feet and said there would be trouble if we didn't release him, so I said I would take full responsibility and keep the man locked up till we got to the Cape. Further, I informed everyone that I wouldn't hesitate to take full advantage of my powers, as we were in a state of war, and that the least sign of disturbance would be instantly dealt with in a similar manner.

As no one wanted to come under this drastic treatment we had no further trouble during the voyage, and I had the pleasure of turning our prisoner over to the chief of the police on our arrival at Capetown docks.

The chief naval transport officer in South Africa then was Captain Chichester, the hero of Manila. When I went to report myself to him, I found him in his shirt-sleeves walking up and down his little office in the clock-tower at the docks. He was a very breezy, abrupt sort of a chap, and I couldn't quite make him out as he expended some of his surplus expletives on me, but getting a merry wink from his secretary I understood, and after that we got along capitally.

I took my party on to Simonstown by rail and they

were housed on board the *Monarch*, while I was given quarters on board the *Penelope* and put in charge of the Boer prisoners who had been captured at Elands Laagte, among whom was the famous Colonel Schiel.

When I reported myself to the Commander-in-Chief he said :

“What have you come out for? I didn’t want a commander.”

I replied that I had been sent out by the Admiralty and I hoped he would send me to the front.

“You want to take the bread out of the mouths of the officers on the station,” was his reply.

“Surely there is enough bread for everyone,” I said.

“I can’t understand what all this eagerness to get to the front is,” whined the admiral.

He was really quite impossible ; so I left his office. Only two or three days before, the naval brigade under Captain Prothero had been badly knocked about, so everyone that could be spared was wanted, yet here was the British Naval Commander-in-Chief saying he didn’t want a commander. It was awful.

Never shall I forget the faces of the officers at Simonstown in those days. There wasn’t one who could squeeze out a smile. The news was depressing, defeat after defeat, and yet there were guns and men enough to blow the Boers to hell if they had only been made use of.

There was an absurd idea in the admiral’s mind that the ships must be kept fully manned in case they were attacked from the sea. But who was going to attack us? Only a European power could do it, and ships could come out from England fast enough to stop that. Another thing was that we hadn’t a decent

fighting ship on the station, and it would have been better to lay them up and use their guns against the Boers than leave them to be sunk if there had been such a possibility as a naval action.

Any other admiral would have gone to Ladysmith himself and would have taken every gun and every shell he could have laid his hands on. I would have liked to have seen Harry Rawson out there then. He would have been at Glencoe, before war was declared, with a brigade of 2,000 men and all the guns of the fleet.

If it hadn't been for Percy Scott and Hedworth Lambton the Navy would have been disgraced for ever. They both did all they could do under the circumstances and saved the situation. All honour to both of them.

On board the *Penelope*, an old ironclad that was present at the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882, it was dull work. The most interesting prisoner I had was Colonel Schiel, the famous commander of the Boer forces at the battle of Elands Laagte, and I had many conversations with him.

He was a very interesting man and of German origin. He had been wounded at the end of the battle and spent the night on the hill where he fell. He had the greatest admiration for the Gordon Highlanders, whose charge, he told me, was the finest sight he ever saw.

During the wet night which followed the battle the stretcher parties were searching for the wounded. One party came near where Schiel was lying and he heard one man call to another and say :

"Here, Jock, here's a casualty." The two men then proceeded to carefully examine the wounded

Tommy, who gave forth some fearful groans when they tried to roll him over. But they couldn't find his wound anywhere.

"Mon," said one of them, "wha are ye wounded?"

"I'm no wounded," replied the Gordon, "I'm foo."

The Boer laager was just behind the hill and the advancing Gordons had struck it at the end of their charge and found the canteen well stocked. It was a wet night outside and they had every excuse if some of them indulged freely. They well deserved it, for their enemy had fled.

I was only a week in charge of these prisoners and then I was sent up to Durban to command H.M.S. *Forte*. When I arrived there Percy Scott was the commandant of the town and was working in touch with Buller's relieving force at Colenso.

After only a short stay I was ordered to take my ship up to Delagoa Bay and place myself under the orders of Captain F. B. Fisher, who was conducting a semi-blockade. Two or three other vessels arrived later and our force grew to nine ships.

The blockade was a curious one, because it was never seriously carried out. It was really a bluff on both sides. The Germans were very anxious to make us take action against them, and all sorts of telegrams arrived from the Mediterranean and other ports warning us that such and such a German ship was sailing for Lourenço Marques laden with contraband.

The telegrams came so frequently about the German ships that it was obviously done by German agents to make trouble. Two of their ships were seized, the *Herzog* and the *Bundesrath*, and taken to Durban for examination, but nothing was found and they were released.

It was quite possible for a steamer to strike the Portuguese coast further south and run up inside the three-mile limit and reach Delagoa Bay without being boarded, but only one line of steamers did that, a French line called Chargeur Reunis.

I don't believe the Germans smuggled much into the Transvaal, but I am certain that the French did, for I met a Frenchman a few years after the war who was on board the *Amiral Aube* when she put into Delagoa Bay, and he told me that she was full up with contraband.

It happened when the late Captain Freddie Morgan was off the entrance and he stopped the French steamer and examined her, but the French captain was so indignant and got so excited that Morgan let him enter the harbour. I was senior officer inside at the time, and it was reported to me that night that all sorts of electric fittings and other contraband were being landed from the *Amiral Aube* and placed in the custom-house.

Of course I was powerless ; but when I went outside the next day I told Morgan that he had let a full cargo of contraband through and he was furious about it. How the French captain must have chuckled at his successful bluff.

I was sent down to Durban in March, 1900, just after the relief of Ladysmith, and I had a run up country to see the battlefield and stay in camp with our naval brigade at Elands Laagte.

I met the owner of the farm at Colenso, who told me that he had offered his services to the staff at the beginning of the campaign, but they had been refused. He was positive that Buller thought Llangwane Hill was on the Ladysmith side of the Tugela until the

final attack. If that was so, it was one of the worst staff blunders that was ever perpetrated.

I climbed up Spion Kop and found it just as it was after the fight. You couldn't walk a yard without treading on bits of pompom shell, and the whole of the top was strewn with accoutrements.

What struck me most was how little damage was done to Ladysmith. Most of the shells from the Boer guns seemed to have fallen in the gardens. It was extraordinary how few houses were damaged.

After visiting all the places of note around the town we returned to Durban and soon afterwards we steamed out of harbour to resume our duties further north. On our way out we passed two large steamers anchored in the bay, full up with Boer prisoners. Many of these poor devils had never seen the sea before, and it seemed almost the irony of fate that they should be confined in a prison that perpetually rolled 15 degrees each way. We sailors couldn't help inwardly chuckling at their discomfort, but I believe many of them got over their sea-sickness very quickly and rather enjoyed the fishing they invariably got alongside the ship.

The patrolling off Delagoa Bay continued until the British military forces arrived at Komarti Poort, the small town on the borders of Portuguese and Transvaal territory. When our troops were advancing along the railway towards Portuguese territory there was a scheme on for the Navy to take Komarti Poort, and with this end in view the *Monarch* came north from the Cape with a large contingent of sailors and marines under the command of Captain Prothero.

After her arrival in Delagoa Bay the senior officers had a discussion as to the action to be taken. I remember that meeting well because when I advocated

an immediate advance Captain Prothero put his hand on my shoulder and said to me in his gruff voice :

“ Look here, my boy, I have been in one mess and I don't want to be in another.”

He was quite right : we shouldn't have had a chance of success as things turned out.

It was finally agreed that the *Monarch* should be sent to Simonstown for a couple of 4·7 guns, as we had no heavy artillery. Before she had time to get back the soldiers had reached Komarti Poort without our help, so the expedition never came off.

Just before this Paul Kruger had fled to Lourenço Marques, and we had the satisfaction of seeing him sitting in the veranda of the Dutch Consul's house smoking his Boer pipe whenever we walked past the house in the afternoon.

He was well guarded, but there was no need for it, as we had strict orders not to attempt a capture. He was taken home in a Dutch cruiser commanded by Captain Romer, and very soon after he went, all excitement in the place completely vanished.

I took my ship to Durban, and as everyone thought the war was over the naval brigades all returned to their ships and I went back to England and was promoted to captain.

It was nearly three years before I got my first foreign command as a captain. I had the *Scylla* first, for a few weeks during the manœuvres of 1903, and then I was sent out to command the *Forte* on the South African station. She was the same vessel I had commanded during the war.

Soon after my arrival at Simonstown I was sent off to Zanzibar as senior officer on the East African station. I loved this little place and spent several very pleasant

months there. The people were charming and very hospitable, but I had a good deal of cruising about to do and, having just lost my father, was not able to go in for much entertaining.

The Russo-Japanese War was on at this time, and two Russian cruisers were making things very lively on the East African coast by stopping and searching a number of British merchant steamers. Telegrams were of course flying about in reference to their movements and British stations were warned to look out for them. Mauritius got the wind up over this and the island was placed in a state of war. At the time, we had a regiment of infantry and some gunners there, with a General Officer in command.

In the height of the excitement the *Forte* arrived at Mauritius. Immediately after anchoring, the Brigade-Major came on board and informed me that a military signal had come through from the signal post at the south end of the island to say that two Russian cruisers had been sighted steaming to the northward. I asked the military officer if he was quite certain that the information was correct. The Brigade-Major assured me that there could not possibly be any mistake about it.

Being still sceptical, I asked him to get the message repeated. An hour later a signal reached the cruiser saying that the message had been repeated and was correct. I then landed and informed His Excellency the Governor that I would put to sea at once and investigate. I also informed him that I was quite certain that I was on a wild-goose chase and was probably going out to look for my own ship. Two days were spent on this fruitless search and not a sign of any vessel was seen, so the *Forte* returned to Mauritius and anchored.

About ten days later, when some of the sailors were dining at the military mess on shore, the conversation turned on the recent search for the two Russian cruisers. There was a certain amount of chaff and a young subaltern let the cat out of the bag. It appeared that the whole island was in a state of panic when the southern signal station reported a man-of-war in sight. The actual signal sent off was as follows :

“ 2. Cruiser standing to northward.”

The signal which came through was :

“ Two Russian cruisers standing to northward.”

The number two was the number of the telegram, and the word Russian came from someone's imaginative mind.

The young sailors naturally felt that the Navy had been fooled and they returned to their ship full of wrath. The next day one of them divulged the story to me but begged me not to give him away. I didn't say much at the moment but I thought a lot and finally penned the following letter to the G.O.C. :—

SIR,

In reference to the report made to me by your Brigade-Major, when I arrived in this harbour, that two Russian cruisers had been sighted from the south end of the island steering north, I beg to inform you that I have now discovered that the original signal sent off from the southern station simply reported one cruiser steaming to the northward, and that it was altered in transmission to read “ two Russian cruisers.” This military blunder led to H.M. ship under my command having to spend two days at sea looking for Russian cruisers which did not exist.

No doubt you are aware that this search could not

be conducted without expending a certain amount of coal. The cost of the two days' steaming came to £157 14s. 7d., and I feel convinced that, under the circumstances, you would not expect me to send the bill in to the Admiralty. In any case they would certainly refuse to pay such a large sum for a piece of military carelessness. I would therefore be glad if you will inform me whether you will pay the sum yourself or whether you would rather that I sent the account to the War Office.

I have the honour to be, etc., etc.

Having sent this document ashore I took myself off to Reduit to stay with the Governor for a few days. I reported the whole occurrence to His Excellency and was asked if I intended to make the military pay.

"Oh dear, no," I replied. "I only want to shake the old General up a bit and teach him to be more careful in future. Besides which, your Excellency, he knew of his mistake the next day and he instructed his officers to keep it as dark as possible, so he deserves no mercy."

That evening a telegram came through to the Governor from the G.O.C. saying that owing to the action of the captain of the British cruiser, he (the General) could no longer be responsible for the safety of the island.

Two days later I received from the General a very long reply to my letter, which evaded the subject of payment for the coal entirely and seemed chiefly to show what a stew the General was in. He evidently wanted to prevent the War Office knowing anything about it.

I did not answer this document for several days.

It was not until the *Forte* was on the point of sailing from the island that the following letter was sent on shore to the G.O.C. :—

SIR,

After giving careful consideration to all the circumstances of the case, I beg now to inform you that I do not propose to take any further action.

Your obedient servant, etc., etc.

That ended the correspondence and the good ship sailed away to other seas.

One evening, a few weeks later, when I was returning to my ship at Zanzibar after visiting some friends, I met one of my officers who told me that a steamer had just arrived and one of the passengers had come to see me to report that he had seen two Russian cruisers lying in British waters, at the south end of Zanzibar Island, about twenty-five or thirty miles off. As we had been instructed to intercept these vessels, as they had been interfering with our commerce, I took immediate steps to get my ship ready for sea. I saw the passenger and, as his evidence was very clear, I went ashore and told the Consul-General that I was off as soon as I could get up steam.

He asked me what I was going to do, and I told him that that all depended on circumstances. He asked if he could come with me ; but I wasn't such a fool as I looked, so the answer was in the negative.

We got away at 3 a.m. and sure enough at daylight we discovered our two friends lying close under the shore. As soon as they saw us they got their anchors up, but dropped them again as soon as they were able to distinguish our flag.

I anchored my ship close to the biggest and sent a letter to the senior Russian officer to tell him that he was anchored in British waters and must leave at once.

This brought the Russian captain on board my ship very quickly and he demanded twenty-four hours' notice, which I refused to give him, because he was there for an illegal purpose—that of coaling from one of his own transports. He assured me that he came in from stress of weather, which I knew was a lie, because the sea had been like glass for weeks. I told him this, and also that I knew he was awaiting his collier, which he denied.

However, he consented to go at last, and during the forenoon the *Smolensk* and *Petersburg* steamed away to the southward. Just as they got under weigh we sighted a strange steamer, with huge derricks, making for the anchorage, so I followed slowly to see what happened.

As soon as the Russian cruisers got close to the collier they all altered course together towards the German port of Dar-es-Salaam, where I heard they arrived later in the day and coaled. I then went back to Zanzibar and got a pat on the back from the Sultan.

We heard no more of the Russians after that, for they were ordered to leave our ships alone, so I resumed my peaceful duties and no further excitements took place.

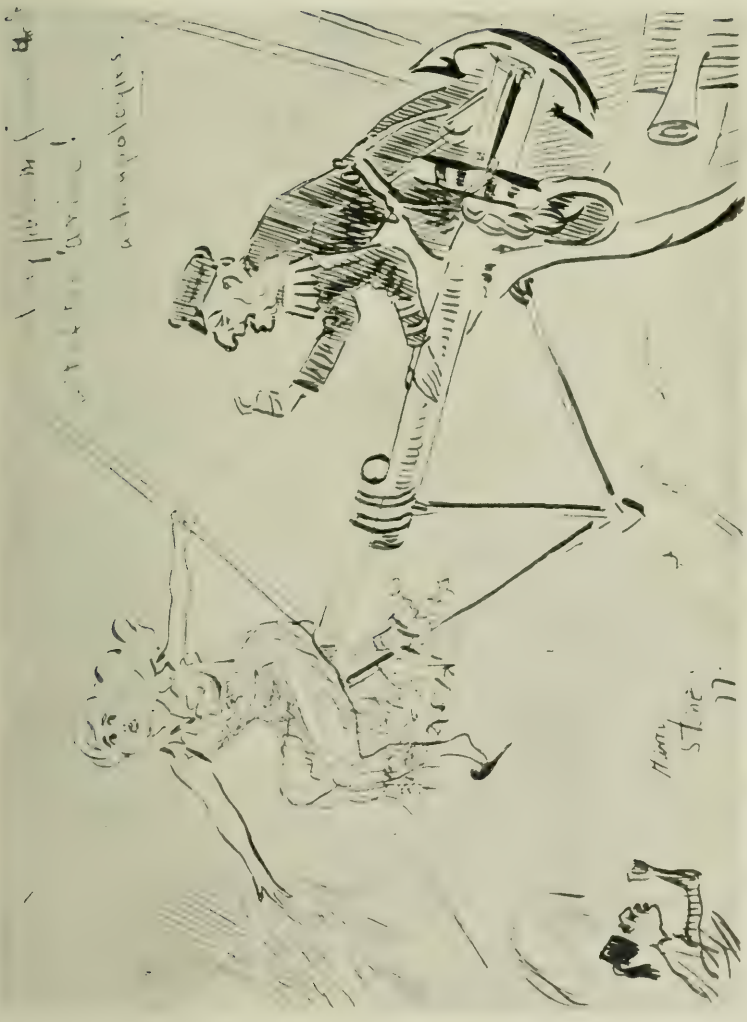
CHAPTER XXIII

CONCLUDING YARNS

IN the year 1854 my father commanded a man-of-war in the Crimea. One day when he was steaming slowly up the Golden Horn, very close to the shore, he ran his jib-boom through the window of a pasha's harem. The engines were at once put to full speed astern. Amidst the shrieks of the ladies and the angry shouts of the Turks, the vessel slowly backed out without doing any damage.

My father declared that he was astounded by seeing a beautiful lady seated on the jib-boom, apparently delighted at her escape. He ran forward to the fore-castle to offer her the hospitality of his ship ; but she refused to move from her somewhat precarious position. Being obliged to return to the bridge to stop the engines, he later found to his dismay that the heavenly apparition had mysteriously faded away. What became of the lady no one knew, as nobody had seen her but himself, but she lived for ever in his memory and grew in beauty and fascination as the years waxed older. I reproduce a contemporary sketch of the incident ; so it must be true.

A distinguished naval officer was boarding a bus during the rush hours in Armistice week. He hated buses, and was only driven by desperation through



WHAT THE JIB-BOOM BROUGHT OUT OF THE HAREN.

the absence of taxis to adopt such a perilous mode of locomotion. About forty women occupied the conductor's platform, while another forty were clambering on to the step, on which he had just succeeded in placing his foot. Tempers were getting sorely tried, while subconscious swear words floated about in the atmosphere. Suddenly a woman just behind him, in her anxiety to get a place, seized him by the seat of his pants. Turning on her with great ferocity he said, "Madam, if you will only leave me my trousers, I will give you the whole bus."

She dissembled.

The marines were landing for drill in heavy marching order and the launch was alongside the gangway waiting to take them ashore. An able seaman with bare feet was standing in the stern-sheets of the boat, holding on to the ship with a boathook, as the marines were coming down the gangway. The rise and fall of the swell made operations rather difficult, and a hefty Joey, weighing well over 200 lb. with all his accoutrements, half tumbled into the launch, and landed on the able seaman's toes with "an awfi dint," as they say in Scotland.

Holding his bleeding foot with both hands, the sailor looked up at the marine and said, "You boys seem to think you're a lot o' blooming canaries 'opping about from twig to twig."

"Your husband is a soldier, isn't he?" asked the distinguished admiral's wife.

"Yes," replied her guest, "he is a Brigadier-General."

"Oh, that's the very lowest form of General, isn't it?" enquired the D.A.W.

"No," thought the visitor, "there's one lower

which would better suit your manners than your present position does."

In one of the old-fashioned village kirks in Scotland the minister was preaching to his congregation on the subject of Jonah. Just in front of his low desk sat an "auld buddy" who was much interested in the discourse. The reverend gentleman was working himself and his hearers up to a fever of excitement as to what kind of a fish it was which had so distinguished itself in biblical history.

"Aiblins it was herrin'?" he said.

"Aye, but it was no a herrin'.

"Aiblins it was a cod?" he continued.

"Aye, but it was no cod.

"Then, ma deerly beloved braithren, what sort o' a fush was it?"

"Was it a shairk?"

The "auld buddy" in front could contain herself no longer and seizing her opportunity suggested that it was a whale. This so infuriated the minister that he rose in his wrath, and, bashing her over the "heid" with the "gude buk," cried out:

"Ye daft blethering bizum, ye're takkin' the word of God oot o' the mooth o' ane o' His ministers."

An English tourist was tramping along a West Highland road, when seeing a man digging on the hillside, he called out to him, addressing him as Donald.

At first the Highlander took no notice, but getting weary of the continued interference of the stranger, eventually shouldered his spade and sauntered down to the road to see what the Sassenach wanted.

When he came down the man again addressed him

as "Donald" and asked the way to Ballachulish.

"An' hoo did ye ken ma name was Donald?" enquired the Highlander.

"I guessed it," said the tourist.

"Then ye mon guess the way to Ballachulish," was the prompt reply, and with that the braw hielan'man returned to his work.

Returning home to Scotland after some years on a foreign station, I got my first experience of ladies playing golf on the men's links at North Berwick. I was playing either the fourteenth or fifteenth hole when I saw two scarlet coats coming towards me on the outward journey carrying their own clubs. As soon as I saw their skirts, I said to my caddie, "Good heavens, what's this coming along?"

"Dinna heid them, sir," said the caddy, "they're a perfect abomination."

A portly Englishman was playing on a northern golf links when he asked his caddie what club he ought to use in approaching one of the holes. "Use your cleek, of course," said the caddie. "I don't think you're right," said the portly one, "I believe it would be better to use the niblick." "Ye'd better use the cleek," replied the caddie very abruptly. But his advice was not taken and a very good shot was made with the niblick, which landed the ball within a yard of the hole. On reaching the green the Englishman said, "I thought I would make a good shot with the niblick." "You'd have made a better if you'd used the cleek," was all he got out of his caddie in reply.

During the course of a morning round with his caddie a golfer [*sic*] asked him what sort of a player Mr. Taylor was. "Oh, he's nae guid at a'," said the

caddie, "he canna hit a ba'." "That's capital," replied the golfer, "as I am playing him this afternoon for five shillings."

"He'll lick ye," replied the caddie.

A spinster lady, whose conscience was a little uneasy as to her early past, was spending her last hours in bed previous to a journey to the great Unknown. With her was her best friend, who was trying to smooth the path leading to the Golden River. "I will see that you are beautifully laid out," she said, "your shroud will be pure white and I will place a bunch of white lilies in your virgin hands." The invalid closed her eyes and lay peacefully as her life ebbed slowly away. Just before the end she appeared to want to say something, and her friend put her ear close to the dying woman's mouth.

"Just a touch of mauve, darling," fell from the quivering lips, and then all was still. Her friend, after reflection, thought it would be safer to put in a bunch of violets.

A lady was calling on the minister's wife in a small town north of the Tweed.

Conversation turned on religious subjects, and it soon became very apparent that the mistress of the manse was well satisfied with her future prospects. The couple had a reputation for being very optimistic in this respect, and the visitor, being somewhat of a sceptic, said to her hostess, "And do you really think, Mrs. Mackenzie, that you are certain to go to heaven when you die?" "Oo aye," said the wife, "but whiles I hae ma doots about the minister."

A friend was calling on a Scotch couple, whose daughter had lately been married, and asked the

mother how the bride was getting on. "Oh, Jean's verra lucky," she said. "She has a braw hoose, oosen, kye and muckle siller ; but there's aye something—she canna abide the mon."

THE END

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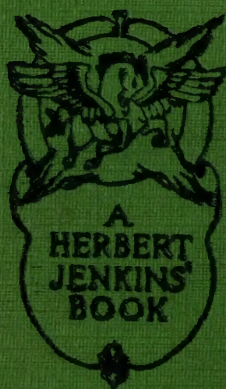
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